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John Waldie

Novels and

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LETTERS

OF

MISS RIVERSDALE.

VOL. III.

G. Woodfall, Printer,
Paternoster-row, London.

LETTERS

OF

MISS RIVERSDALE.

A NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

LONDON:

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1803.

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UNIV OF CALIFORNIA

LETTERS OF MISS RIVERSDALE.

THE JOURNAL CONTINUED.

(Written by Miſs Riverſdale, in the Margin.)

[The abruptneſs with which my laſt pacquet broke off, was occaſioned by a meſſage from Sir George Rutland, to ſay, a ſervant of his was ſetting out for London in a few hours, who would ſafely convey a parcel. I immediately made up as many ſheets as I could ſeparate, without breaking into the ſenſe; and had not an inſtant's time to add a word to them.]

The 6th.—UPON recollection I find, that I have, after all, omitted to relate my converſation with Monſieur de Sainval, which, though ſhort, appears to me but too important, as marking a diſpoſition very unpromiſing for my friend's proſpects.

Obſerving my wan countenance, he attributed my fatigue chiefly to the "unceaſing loudneſs of Madame de Sainval's tongue," as he contemptuouſly expreſſed it.

I could never think myſelf a ſufferer (I ſaid) from what ſhowed my friend to ſuch advantage, as I thought her lively wit had done that day.

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"It is not wit that she wants," he replied, "but discretion in the use of it: could she learn of Miss Riversdale to keep it within proper bounds—"

"I cannot accept of a compliment at Madame de Sainval's expense," interrupting him: "there is small merit in restraining what is so little likely to overflow; I should have more difficulty in finding my wit, than in suppressing its exuberance."

He had taken up a collection of Poems that was lying by me, and happening to open the book at Lord Lyttelton's monody, "I should have thought you had sitten for this picture," said he, reading,

"A wit that temperately bright, &c.*"

"The poet wrote those lines upon his *wife*," I replied, "and if you will read them all, it will show you what true connubial felicity is—"

"And make me doubly wretched in the want of it—I did not think you could have been so cruel."

"You will deem me still more so, per-

* Lord Lyttelton's monody.

haps, when I ſay that I ſhould rejoice, from the bottom of my heart, to think the regret you now expreſs ſincere."

"Your joy may be *complete* then,—for in all ſincerity I am miſerable beyond expreſſion."

"My joy will only be complete, when I ſhall prove the happy inſtrument of removing your miſery."

"I fear your inclination will fall ſhort of your power in that reſpect."

"Let my power but equal my inclination, and I will pronounce you a happy man."

He looked perplexed, and as wiſhing to ſay ſomething—but was ſilent—

"And my friend the happieſt of women;" I continued.

"Name not her and happineſs in one breath to me, Miſs Riverſdale; it is through her that I am precluded from every proſpect of it—"

"And therefore can it only through her be reſtored? And I think I may venture to aſſert, that there is not a man in the world, yourſelf excepted, who would be averſe to be made happy by her."

"There is not, perhaps, another man in the world ſo completely the object of her averſion."

"Averſion, I ſhould think, could only ariſe from ſome material defect either in perſon or diſpoſition; and, as I believe her firſt ſight of you was at the foot of the altar, there could ſcarcely be averſion on either part."

"I think that, for the firſt time in her life, perhaps, Miſs Riverſdale is endeavouring to argue againſt her own conviction—ſhe cannot be a ſtranger to Madame de Sainval's rooted averſion to me long before ſhe ſaw me; her mother has acknowledged it with tears many a time."

"I am certainly aware, that *intereſted, artful people* may work upon a child's mind, and inſtil prejudices, that would require a long continuance of affectionate conduct to root out."

"I am at a loſs to conjecture what intereſted or artful people could be concerned in the event of our unhappy union."

"I know from herſelf, that the nuns of the convent, in which ſhe was educated, took

pains to repreſent you to her as a monſter, whoſe chief delight would be to make her wretched—"

"This is a circumſtance perfectly new to me, certainly, but *now perfectly immaterial*, or I ſhould ſay it was not eaſy to aſſign an adequate motive for it; any more than for Madame de Valence's concealment of it, at a time when it might, perhaps, have had ſome influence upon me—"

"The motive of the nuns was probably Madame de Sainval's fortune, of which her preference of the convent would have enſured at leaſt a conſiderable ſhare to them; and Madame de Valence might not chooſe to accuſe her friends, when it did not occur to her that it would anſwer any purpoſe; but why ſhould it be *now immaterial?* ſurely it is never too late to repair injuſtice!"

"When injuſtice has gone lengths, that have given fair ground for actual hatred, it never can be forgiven—"

"You know not the generoſity of the Marchioneſs's mind," I contended with earneſtneſs, "and if you would ſuffer me—"

"Excuſe me, Miſs Riverſdale, I do not

now wiſh to know it," interrupted he, with extreme agitation.

A meſſage brought to him juſt then put an end to the converſation, and he ſeemed glad of the excuſe to retire from its continuance. But it muſt not end here—I ſhall take the earlieſt opportunity of reſuming it; though I acknowledge theſe chilling words, *I do not now wiſh to know it,* dwell upon my heart, and deaden its hopes of my Adine's happineſs.

Madame de Sainval the next morning called upon my candour, to give her credit for her forbearance, as well in ſeveral little inſtances that have of late occurred, as at the Ambaſſador's; "but you will ſoon be obliged to come over to my opinion," ſhe ſaid, "and acknowledge it to be all in vain."

"You cannot expect, that the change ſhould produce an effect ſo immediate: as yet Monſieur de Sainval may, perhaps, attribute it more to chance than intention; and in the meanwhile, if you were to reap no greater advantage from it than that of avoiding quarrels, I ſhould think you in ſome degree repaid for the ſacrifice."

" I don't know that—to ſtagnate in apathy is worſe, perhaps; the variety of an occaſional quarrel helps the blood to circulate; however I have found ſomething to keep me alive for the preſent—"

" What is that?"

" Count Caniſac's diſtreſſes."

" I hope they are not very ſerious, ſince you treat them ſo ſportingly, for I like him much."

" They are as ſerious as deſpairing love can make them."

" And are you the confidante of his love?"

" Yes, and the object too."

" And he ventures to tell you of it?"

" To be ſure; how ſhould I know it elſe?"

" And you of courſe have reſented the inſult, in a manner that drives him to deſpair."

" Ha! ha! ha! *reſented the inſult!*—you are getting into your Engliſh altitudes, my Louiſa; we Frenchwomen don't conſider love as an inſult at all—"

" For Heaven's ſake, deareſt Adine, do not play yourſelf into new troubles!"

" I really have no ſuch intention, and,

joking apart, this worthy good man gives me real uneaſineſs; for whilſt I, in the full confidence of ſincere eſteem, have been treating him with all the freedom of an intimate friend, whoſe agreeable converſation was a reſource to me, and whoſe age was a protection againſt ſcandal; here has he involved himſelf, imperceptibly, in the moſt lamentable and hopeleſs paſſion—and now, pray, what am I to do?"

"If you would not laugh at my altitudes again, I'll tell you what I think an Engliſh woman would do—never admit him into her houſe more." (For indeed, Henry, I ſtill flatter myſelf, that the relaxation you diſcover in Engliſh morals is limited to a very confined, and probably *foreign-iſed* circle.)

"*Ah bon dieu!*" Madame de Sainval exclaimed, "*on ſe feroit montrer au doigt ici**, by ſuch an unheard of piece of prudery; for I can have nothing to fear from him, you know; and beſides, friendſhip entitles him to gentler treatment."

"Harſhneſs in this caſe would perhaps be the trueſt friendſhip; you would by that

* Ah! good Heavens, I ſhould be pointed at in this country.

means compel him to the recovery of his peace of mind."

" Je renonce à l'honneur de paſſer pour Romaine,
*Si pour l'obtenir, il faut être inhumaine *,"*

declaiming humorouſly, " you muſt ſuggeſt ſomething more practicable."

" Why then you muſt have recourſe to his reaſon.—He is at an age to hear reaſon, I ſhould think.'

" I dare ſay he has worn his reaſon thread-bare by this time; the will have nothing to ſay, but what ſhe has ſaid upon fifty former occaſions; for men are always floundering, you know, from one improper attachment to another, and poor reaſon keeps interpoſing, and getting kick'd aſide, till they really come to hold her in perfect contempt: and then the misfortune is, that he takes it into his head he never really loved till now, and he is ſo diſintereſted, and ſo devoted——"

" Is not *diſintereſtedneſs* love's cant word? I have been told, there never was a lover, who did not boaſt of it, or a woman beloved, who did not believe in it; and when

* I forego the honour of paſſing for a Roman. If it muſt be obtained by inhumanity.

upon trial it fails, I ſuppoſe we are all ready to blame our own irreſiſtible *charms*, which could alone overpower ſuch virtuous intentions, and ſo, kind heartedly acquit the culprit of their making—"

"In truth you ſeem to have been very prettily tutor'd, and apply your leſſons aptly; but now to the point, ſeriouſly what can I do?"

"Seriouſly I think, that abſence only can be effectual; for the daily ſight of you muſt increaſe his attachment, and your uneaſineſs, beſide the danger of involving you in freſh difficulties, which it is at this moment more material than ever to avoid."

"*Allons! je vois qu'aux grands maux il faut de grands remèdes, et je vais de ce pas— 'l'envoyer promener* *,' that is to ſay, I'll adviſe him to travel."

I was quite ſatisfied with this determination, and, as you will perceive, ſtudiouſly avoided giving her reaſon to think, that any thing ſerious had paſſed between the Marquis and me in regard to her; as the leaſt ſuſpi-

* Well, I ſee that great evils require powerful remedies, and I go this inſtant to 'ſend him about his buſineſs.'

cion on her part, that I was endeavouring to ſoften him towards her, would overſet all; more particularly under its preſent unpromiſing aſpect.

After this followed her obſervations upon Mr. Stanville, which, I can't imagine why, (out of their due courſe) I related firſt.

The 8th.—We are invited to ſee a play that is to be acted at Chantilly, by the Prince of C. and his family: his daughter, the Ducheſs of B, is ſaid to be an admirable actreſs. Is it not ſingular, that people of their rank and conſequence ſhould thus exhibit themſelves? for the audience, upon theſe occaſions, amounts to a pretty numerous *public*—and a general invitation is given to whatever Engliſh happen to be at the inn in the village, often without even knowing their names.

I find my ſtrength and ſpirits ſo much improved within theſe few days, that I have agreed to venture upon accompanying Madame de Sainval thither.

Count Caniſac cannot be prevailed upon to leave Paris. To any thing ſhort of im-

poſſibility he is ready to accede; but this is beyond his power. And what harm can ariſe from his ſtay? he ſays, he aſks nothing —he expects nothing, but to be treated as a friend. It is the only conſolation ſhe can beſtow, and is perfectly exempt from danger, to her, at leaſt—his conduct is guarded to a degree, that may defy obſervation—and will ſhe unneceſſarily add to his miſery?

All this diſtreſſes her, and ſhe gives way. I have not the ſlighteſt apprehenſion of her being drawn into any impropriety by it; but I have a preſentiment, that ſomething unpleaſant will ariſe, and earneſtly wiſh ſhe would be more decided in enforcing the neceſſity of his abſence.

The 12th.—We are returned from Chantilly. The entertainment was ſuperb; and really, for Princes and Princeſſes, the performance was good—but for the particular details I muſt find ſome future opportunity; my mind is at this moment engroſs'd by more intereſting matter.

The Chateau, magnificent as it is, not affording accommodations ſufficient for all

the company, one of the detached houſes, which are ſcattered about the Park, was appropriated to our party. Strolling from it yeſterday morning, Madame de Sainval propoſed to ſhow me *the Hamlet* *. When we came to the little bridge, we could not immediately obtain admittance; and when the miller's wife at length opened the wicket, it was with a look ſo full of care, that we were induced to inquire into the cauſe of it.

" A ſad accident!" ſhe ſaid; " *La femme Bertrand's* little girl had diſlocated her hip, and the gentleman was juſt examining it."

" Is the Prince's ſurgeon very ſkilful?" ſaid Madame de Sainval.

" It is an Engliſh gentleman, that the *Milord* has brought," replied the woman.

" If it will not be troubleſome to you, *la bonne femme*, we will go in," Madame de Sainval ſaid; " I underſtand theſe matters a little myſelf, and the diſlocation of a hip bone is a very ſerious buſineſs."

The good woman led the way into the mill-houſe—

The little girl was crying upon the *grabat* †,

* See the account of the gardens of Chantilly.

† Truckle bed.

whilſt the ſurgeon, with the aſſiſtance of the mother, was aſcertaining the nature of the accident. On the other ſide, with his back to the door at which we had entered, ſtood the *Milord*, leaning over the child, holding her hands, and ſoothing her with promiſes of reward, if ſhe would let the gentleman make her well. The buſtle of our entrance drew his attention, and when he raiſed himſelf, and turned to look at us—Henry! you gueſs his name before I can write it—it was Mr. Stanville.

He looked confounded—and we aſtoniſhed.

"Mr. Stanville!" exclaimed Madame de Sainval.

"Chance threw me in the way of ſeeing this accident happen," he ſaid, "and, fearing it to be ſerious, I have begged of my friend, Mr. Chalmers, to give his opinion of it."

"How, my Lord, tells you that!" interrupted the mother, "as if he had done nothing but turn round, and deſire the gentleman to look at it; never was any thing like the trouble he has taken"—and ſhe was proceeding in her gratitude to forget her attention to the child, when Mr. Stanville inter-

rupting her, ſaid, " No matter for the ſtory, till we have done what is needful for Nannette. Mr. Chalmers does not think the ſwelling ſufficiently conſiderable, to prevent its being immediately ſet—but however *ſlight* the operation may prove," he added (with evident humane attention to the mother's fears, who had turned very pale at the mention of ſetting the bone), " I imagine you will prefer waiting the reſult in the ſaloon *, ladies, to remaining here; and if I may be allowed to conduct you, I will return directly to you, my little dear," to the child.

But ſhe clung to his hand, redoubling her cries, " Oh no! oh no! don't leave me."

" Madame de Sainval, perceiving him to look diſtreſſed, ſaid, ſhe knew her way to the ſaloon; and inſiſted upon his not leaving Nannette.

So we went—perplexing ourſelves with conjectures how Mr. Stanville ſhould happen to be there in the morning, after having failed to attend the play the evening before, where Sir George Rutland had poſitively expected him.

* The ſaloon is one of the appendant cottages, that ſurround the green of the Hamlet in Chantilly Park.

As we were ſeating ourſelves upon the ſofa, Madame de Sainval raiſed one of the cuſhions, to direct my attention to the pink and ſilver furniture, and a paper dropped from under it. "A billet doux! my life for it," ſaid ſhe, ſnatching it from me as I picked it up. "We ſhall diſcover ſome of the Prince's ſecrets.—"*Mais non*," looking diſappointed as ſhe glanced her eye over it, "*c'eſt quelque griffonage de vers Anglais* *."

This awakened *my* curioſity—they were evidently love verſes—but ſo interlined and corrected, that it was ſcarcely poſſible to make ſenſe of them—and the hand-writing was wholly unknown to me.

Whilſt we were employed in the attempt to decipher them, Sir George Rutland joined us, and upon being informed of the accident, and Mr. Stanville's ſhare in it, went immediately to the mill-houſe; and they ſoon returned together, ſaying, that the operation had ſucceeded fortunately, and been ſlight, and the mother was now endeavouring to compoſe the child to ſleep, by which means, Mr. Stanville ſaid, he had been able

* No, it is only ſome ſcrawl of Engliſh poetry.

to diſengage his hand from the little creature's, unperceived by her.

How lovely is the expreſſion of humanity in a countenance, Henry! Never did Mr. Stanville's appear to ſuch advantage, as in giving theſe unpremeditated proofs, not only of kind-heartedneſs to misfortune, but of minute attention to the ſparing even of a child's feelings. I think if I had never heard of him before, I muſt have admired him at that inſtant.

He caſt his eyes about the room as he ſpoke, as if anxiouſly looking for ſomething.

"Have you loſt any thing?" ſaid Sir George.

"Nothing of any conſequence," heſitating; "I thought I might, perhaps, have laid a letter out of my hand."

"You are this inſtant come in, and had not any paper in your hand, that I ſaw."

"No—but Chalmers and I ſat here ſome time, waiting till the child ſhould awake—"

"Is this it?" ſaid Madame de Sainval, preſenting the paper we had found.

"No—" with extreme heſitation, and colouring.

"That's your hand-writing, however,"

ſaid Sir George, " or I am very much miſtaken; give me leave, Madam—" offering to take it.

But Mr. Stanville, ſeizing upon it with quickneſs, replied in great confuſion, " You are miſtaken, indeed; it may, however, belong to Chalmers, who writes very like me, and I will reſtore it to him," putting it into his pocket.

" Since when has Chalmers written like you?" ſaid Sir George, ſmiling; " I have ſeen many a preſcription of his, as different as need be—"

" You do not judge of a medical man's hand-writing by his preſcriptions," interrupted Mr. Stanville.

" Not quite ſo certainly, to be ſure, as I do of your ſincerity by your countenance.—Ah, Charles! Charles!" ſhaking his head ſignificantly, " there are occaſions, where honour itſelf compels a man to duplicity;—ſome Pariſian belle, I'll lay my life—you have not been ſo reſerved and grave of late for nothing—"

" For Heaven's ſake, Rutland!" cried Mr. Stanville, with ſtill increaſed embarraſſment, " reſerve your pleaſantry for ſome

more pleaſant occaſion, and do not let us detain theſe ladies by a diſcuſſion ſo very unimportant.——It is beyond the time that the concert was appointed to begin at the *Iſle d'Amour*."

"Let us go, then," ſaid Madame de Sainval; but finding Mr. Stanville turn the contrary way, as we came out of the door ſhe added, "Do not you walk with us?—"

"I have promiſed to take Chalmers immediately back to Paris," Mr. Stanville replied. "He is attending upon Lord ——, who is very ill; and he could not come with me upon any other terms."

"How came you in the way of the accident?" Sir George aſked.

"I was lounging about the Park, yeſterday afternoon, and ſaw a woman ſitting under a tree with a child at her breaſt, and another lying upon the ground by her, crying piteouſly. Upon inquiring what was the matter, ſhe ſaid that the poor little girl had fallen, and, ſhe feared, broke her leg; and not being able to carry both the children, ſhe was endeavouring to put the baby to ſleep, that ſhe might leave it under the tree, till ſhe could take Nannette to the mill,

where ſhe would remain ſafe till ſhe could get her huſband to fetch her home. I undertook to carry Nannette to the mill; but the child ſcreamed ſo much when I attempted to raiſe her, that I thought it better to ſee for aſſiſtance; and taking the baby with me, who had fallen aſleep, I left the mother to endeavour in the meanwhile to get Nannette into an eaſier poſture; and depoſiting my little charge at the mill, got a labourer to return with me, who aſſiſted in weaving ſome branches together, upon which we laid her, and carried her between us without any increaſe of pain. Finding it to be an affair of more difficulty than merely a broken bone, I determined to go immediately back to Paris for Chalmers, on whoſe ſkill I have greater reliance than on that of the *Valet de Chambre Chirurgien du Château.* I prevailed upon la femme Dumont, by means of a trifle, to let the child remain at the mill till my return. Unfortunately Chalmers had been ſent to a friend of the Ambaſſador's, at Verſailles. I waited for him till midnight, which prevented me from meeting you at the play, and I was after all obliged to take patience till this morning; and am now again

under the mortifying neceſſity to forego the honour of attending theſe ladies to the concert."

And he took his leave.

We proceeded to the concert—but I acknowledge to you, Henry, that I can give you no account of it—or of any thing that afterward paſſed—My ſpirit had fled after the humane, the benevolent, the kind-hearted Stanville: and ſome of the circumſtances that had occurred filled my mind ſo variouſly, that I ſtill hardly know how to unravel or diſcuſs them.

The 13th.—There cannot be a doubt of the verſes having been written by Mr. Stanville; he is too open in his nature to diſſemble well; though for whom they may have been meant?—certainly they bore an appearance, that tended to confirm the conjectures of Madame de Sainval—but then Sir George Rutland's obſervation again cruſhed the idea——

Ah, Stanville! are you ſo prone to admiration? and has your ſuſceptibility already led you into *ſo many* ſcrapes?—aſſuredly, then, ſome previous attachment—or perhaps

an engagement formed, may conſtrain him to avoid Louiſa—if, indeed, he has for a moment thought her likely to endanger his peace. Thoſe verſes may have been addreſſed to the happier object.—Sir George could not mean, my deareſt brother, to accuſe Mr. Stanville of being that moſt contemptible of all characters, a general flirt! a character, contemptible even in our ſex; in a man, by ſo much worſe, as it is more cruelly miſchievous: ſtill leſs could he mean to inſinuate, that he was unprincipled in the indulgence of his paſſions—that he was, in ſhort, a libertine! deteſted word! how ſhould it and Stanville find acceſs to my thoughts at the ſame moment! I would not for an inſtant ſo wrong him; his very conduct in this inſtance, ſuppoſing it poſſible that I ſhould have made an impreſſion, acquits him of the odious charge; it proves the ſtrictneſs of his principles beyond a doubt—but what then could Sir George Rutland mean? I am perplexed and agitated more than I can expreſs.

Since that moment Mr. Stanville has never been near us; he leaves Paris very ſhortly. Good God, Henry! will he go without

giving the ſlighteſt explanation of his impenetrable conduct?

I am very ill at eaſe, and I dare not touch upon the ſubject with Sir George—he could have no difficulty to explain, at leaſt the import of his own words—but there is an indelicacy—a meanneſs in ſounding—in pumping a friend—I could not ſubmit to it.

The 14th.—Sir George is a kind-hearted, generous man! Did *he* talk of being callous? only in compariſon of Mr. Stanville, he muſt have meant. He has been to Chantilly, purpoſely to ſee after little Nannette, and probably with a view to offer pecuniary aſſiſtance, if he found it wanted; but he was informed by the poor people, that Mr. Stanville had amply ſupplied them.

Of courſe he mentioned this without alluſion to his own benevolent intentions; but it is natural to infer, that he would not have aſked the queſtion, if he had not meant to ſupply the deficiency he might diſcover: Sir George is not an elegant man of the world, but there appears to be a great fund of ſterling worth in him.

The 15th.—I have at length received the following letter from Lady Mary *Malcolm*. Her long ſilence has been matter of ſurpriſe and anxiety, which I have dwelt upon both to my mother and Lady Belfont; although I may have omitted the mention of it to you, my fear of falling into repetitions will now and then occaſion me to be leſs faithful in tranſcribing the thoughts that ariſe in my mind, than I uſed to be.

Pray read the letter here.

LADY MARY MALCOLM, TO LOUISA.

(Tranſcribed and encloſed.)

"*London.*———

"You will be almoſt equally ſurpriſed at my date, and at my ſilence, my dear Miſs Riverſdale: the one will, however, account for the other.

"I had left Nice, the happy wife of the worthieſt of men, before your letter reached it. I have ſince been at Vienna, and returned through Germany and Holland to England; but our ſtay at any place was too uncertain, to admit of our directing letters to be ſent after us; they were therefore ordered to be forwarded ſtraight to my brother's banker here, to

await our arrival, which we happily effected laſt night; and your letter was the very firſt I opened, of the number put into my hand.

"You will readily believe, I peruſed it with trembling anxiety: the dread of diſcovering, that, after all, I might perhaps have impeded the happineſs, which I have ever valued ſo much beyond my own, could only be equalled by the heartfelt ſatisfaction I experience in finding, that I have acted in perfect conſonance to your wiſhes, by giving my hand, without awaiting any farther intelligence from you.

"You have acted nobly, my lovely friend, in every circumſtance of which I am enabled to judge; and I cannot doubt your having done ſo throughout. I now ſtand indebted to you for the poſſeſſion of a felicity, to which I had never dared to aſpire; and you have added this inexpreſſible obligation to all the motives I before had for admiring and loving you: judge, then, how deeply I muſt feel for the ſufferings you have experienced, and how truly I enjoy the certainty of your perfect recovery, which was this morning confirmed to me by Lady Belfont.

"You are too well acquainted with the

open honeſty of my nature, to doubt for a moment, that my firſt impulſe, after reading your generous letter, muſt be, to put it into the Colonel's hands; for I ſhould ſcorn to owe even my happineſs to the continuance of his errour in regard to you. Juſtice compels me to give you his anſwer in his own words, however vain they may make me appear.

'I will frankly acknowledge,' he ſaid, 'that had ſo much reaſon been given me in the firſt inſtance, to believe that Louiſa had no ſhare in the ſteps taken by Lady Riverſdale, it might have prevented my becoming the happy man I now am; for in doing all juſtice to the object upon which I had ſet my heart, I muſt ſtill feel thankful, that an opportunity was given me to diſcover, which way my true road to felicity lay. The faſcinations of Louiſa had blinded me to the impoſſibility that ſeventeen and forty-five could aſſimilate: after making every ſacrifice I could require, ſhe muſt have felt what ſhe was giving up; and however her ſenſe and ſweetneſs might have gloſſed it over, I muſt have felt it likewiſe; and that idea would have proved the bane of every comfort. In *you* I am con-

ſtantly diſcovering new ſources of unlooked-for enjoyment; our pleaſures, our taſte, our wiſhes the ſame; the evenneſs of your temper, and the charms of your mind, daily and hourly riſe upon me; and to ſum up all, I have the delightful conſciouſneſs, that in me all your affections are centred. Unworthy indeed ſhould I be of ſo many bleſſings, if I could even for a moment regret the deluſion, to which I am indebted for the poſſeſſion of them. At the ſame time it is a ſatisfaction to me, to find that Louiſa has not deviated from the honour and rectitude, which I had admired in her. It is mortifying to be deceived in the object we have thought highly of; and I rejoice in it on her own account, becauſe I never can ceaſe to be warmly intereſted in her welfare, which will be beſt ſecured by the good and noble ſentiments, that fill her mind.'

"And now, my deareſt Miſs Riverſdale, if, by the faithful report of words, ſo honourable to the heart that could dictate them, I awaken a regret in you, at having relinquiſhed a man ſo unrivalled in worth, I ſhall ſtill have a drawback upon that felicity, of which the cup ſeems overflowing. No words can

do juſtice to the ſenſe I have of my fortunate lot.

" We are on our way to Mount Melvile, where my brother inſiſts upon our taking up our abode, until we can fix upon a ſituation we may like better. Malcolm had ſucceeded in his views at Vienna; but my brother could not be ſatisfied to have us at a diſtance from him, and has trebled the fortune he had originally ſettled upon me, to indemnify the Colonel for the advantages he may forego.

" To all the bleſſings I have already boaſted, I muſt add, that my health is now perfectly reeſtabliſhed. You will therefore readily credit, and I am ſure be gratified to know, that there does not exiſt upon the face of the earth a happier being than your truly affectionate friend,

MARY MALCOLM."

I do not, my dear brother, recollect to have experienced a moment in my life of ſuch unmixed delight, as in the reading of this letter. To think that I have at length been the fortunate inſtrument, that has enſured

happineſs to her, who was ſacrificing ſo much to me!—to think that Colonel Malcolm is ſo fully ſenſible of her value, as to acquit me of all impropriety, even without being thoroughly informed of all the particulars!—to feel myſelf again raiſed in the eyes of thoſe I muſt ever eſteem—is altogether ſuch ſatisfaction, as it is quite impoſſible for me to give you an idea of.

Let me now but once be aſſured, that the mind of Prince Polinſki is at eaſe—and then, having nobody to feel for but myſelf, you ſhall ſee what a philoſopher I am.

I believe I omitted to tell you, that I had immediately written an anſwer to the Prince; in which, however, I avoided to mention my engagement with Colonel Malcolm being at an end, leſt he might conſtrue it into an intention to revive his hopes, or, at leaſt, for fear it ſhould in any degree ſhake his reſolution *.

* Though Miſs Riverſdale makes no regular concluſion to theſe few pages of her journal, yet as the packet appears to have been made up ſeparately, and the ſubject ends with it, the Editor inſerts the following letter here, as its moſt appropriate place.

THE HONOURABLE CHARLES STANVILLE,
TO SIR HENRY RIVERSDALE.

Paris———

Riverſdale, you have undone me! Why did you not bid me flee the ſight of your ſiſter, like that of a baſiliſk? You ſpoke of her in terms, that might have applied to many a woman I have ſeen, admired, and thought of no more; and indeed one half of what you ſaid I attributed to fraternal partiality.—Could I have foreſeen what awaited me, I had croſſed the Atlantic ere I had encountered it.

Lady Belfont, too! uſually ſo laviſh in praiſe of her friends; ſo ſilent about Louiſa.—Louiſa!—there is a faſcination in the very name. I could repeat it for ever.

You talked of the bloom of health—of captivating ſimplicity of manners. I had met with theſe before, and eſcaped their influence; but what are theſe to the peculiar attractions of your enchanting ſiſter?

"I ſaw, and loved—I heard, and was undone."

Never before did accents of ſuch irre-

fiſtible ſweetneſs ſteal into my ſoul. *Bloom!* did you ſay? I could have withſtood bloom; but the intereſting paleneſs, that her late illneſs has ſtill, occaſionally, left lingering on her cheek—the mild luſtre beaming from her eye—the viciſſitude which every ſentiment of her elegant mind transfuſes into her ſweet countenance—the unaffected grace that plays around her, and marks every motion—in ſhort, elegance would be her predominant characteriſtic, did not feeling, ſenſe, animation, and modeſty vie for preeminence with it, and her unaſſuming ſweetneſs blend the whole into ſuch a maſs of perfection, as never before united in one woman. Louiſa, indeed, perſonifies the ideal angel my fancy has pictured to me, when, in my proud boaſtings of an unſubdued heart, I have ſaid, until ſuch a form is realiſed, I bid defiance to the power of the ſex.

Alas, Riverſdale! could I have imagined the actual exiſtence of ſuch a being, the very expectation of one day finding it would have ſaved me from the curſed ſcrape, in which I am now involved; or, once involved, the dread of meeting with it would have baniſhed me from the ſociety of womankind,

leſt magic like this ſhould overpower the ſenſe of honour and conſcience. But here, unwarned, unarmed, I have ruſhed headlong into danger, and am overwhelmed. Till now my only knowledge of love has begun and ended in mere ſenſation; but Louiſa has elicited a refined ſpark from my heart, of the exiſtence of which I was unconſcious; it is the electric fire of love that ſhe inſpires, purified from the groſſer element: never till now did I know what tender awe—what heart-felt veneration belong to true love; ſenſation becomes a ſecondary object; I ſcarcely imagine a happineſs beyond that of ſeeing and hearing her for ever. What a new man am I become! and only to make me more deeply ſenſible of my miſery.

The very firſt inſtant I beheld her, admoniſhed me of my danger, and I determined never to ſee her more; but an unforeſeen meeting at Lord ———'s, overturned all my reſolutions. I have no longer the power to think, or to act; and nothing is left me, but to have recourſe to you. I deſiſt from the object of my journey to the ſouth of France, and have obtained from the Ambaſſador diſpatches of conſequence to

carry to England, as an excuſe for my ſpeedy return thither, which will be very ſhortly after the receipt of this. There I will lay open my whole heart and difficulties to you, and be guided by your deciſion: for though I fear I know but too well what honour calls for, I have no longer the power to obey its dictates, unleſs ſtrengthened by the rhetoric of a friend.——Oh, Riverſdale! that I could flatter myſelf you would ſee my ties in a leſs ſtrong light than they appear to me, and I ſhould feel leſs wretched—leſs diſtracted than I do.

Ever truly and faithfully yours,

CHARLES STANVILLE.

MISS RIVERSDALE'S JOURNAL CONTINUED.

March the 16th.—Monſieur de Sainval returned to Paris yeſterday.

It accidentally happened, that he and I were left alone for about half an hour after dinner. "Would I ſing to him?" he aſked. I had a ſlight hoarſeneſs, and declined it. "Would I play at trictrac?" "I had hoped," I ſaid, "that, after the

opening of converſation we had laſt had together, he would rather have wiſhed to purſue that topic, than have recourſe to any thing elſe."

He ſighed. "I have nothing to hope, and much to fear, from confidential converſation with you, Miſs Riverſdale."

"I had rather flattered myſelf, Marquis, that my unbounded friendſhip for Madame de Sainval, joined to the eſteem I have conceived for you, might have led you to conſider me as entitled to friendly confidence."

"Can eſteem for me exiſt in the breaſt of a friend of Madame de Sainval's? Does ſhe not upon every occaſion paint me in the blackeſt colours?"

"So far from it, that, even at the very moment of her relating her ſufferings and misfortunes to me, I have occaſionally perceived her to ſoften, in a manner which has convinced me, that a very little conceſſion on your part would have gone a great way towards inſpiring her with ſentiments very favourable to you."

"Impoſſible, Miſs Riverſdale! ſhe has endeavoured to make the beſt of herſelf to you. Virtue, amiable, and gentle like yours,

inſpires all who approach you with a wiſh to emulate it. She imagined you would think leſs well of her, if ſhe avowed the invincible contempt and hatred for her huſband, that fill her breaſt."

"I have very attentively ſtudied my friend, during the various opportunities my ſlow recovery has afforded; and, I think, diſguiſe of any kind is the laſt thing, of which I ſhould accuſe her: on the contrary, if I have a fault to find with her, it is that, of making the worſt of herſelf upon many occaſions."

"*If you have a fault to find with her!*" repeating my words with ſurpriſe. "You are ſurely very indulgent, or very blind to your friends; or perhaps, from a miſtaken kindneſs, only wiſh to place her in a favourable light to me."

"I avow myſelf deeply intereſted in ſetting her in a very different light from what ſhe has ever yet appeared to you; but believe me, my good Sir, if inſincerity or concealment of any kind were requiſite for that purpoſe, I ſhould ſhrink from the undertaking."

"The only good point I have ever diſco-

vered in the Marchioneſs, is her exceſſive attachment to you, Miſs Riverſdale: *that* has inclined me to think better of her lately, than I have done before: yet why ſhould I eſteem it any merit in her, to obey the univerſal law of attraction, which is ſo avowedly your property, that all attempt to reſiſt it is vain—you take poſſeſſion of every faculty of the ſoul—"

"Take care, Marquis," interrupting him, and endeavouring to ſmile off what I did not wiſh to underſtand in this ſpeech, "take care how you acknowledge my power over your faculties, leſt I ſhould bend them to a control that would make you bluſh at all your former injuſtice, and force you into happineſs, to which you have too long been blind."

"All poſſibility of happineſs has long been at an end for me," he replied, with a deep ſigh; "and the conviction is impreſſed upon me now more ſtrongly than ever. Had an angel ſuch as you interfered ſome years ago, there might have been a chance of bringing us both to a different way of thinking, from that which has now taken root too ſtrongly

to be eradicated; but even then to turn my eyes or thoughts as you would wiſh, I muſt never have beheld the charms before me."

"Monſieur de Sainval," I interrupted very gravely, "if theſe outrageous compliments are merely intended to evade the ſubject ſo near my heart, I cannot but feel mortified, to be treated ſo like a very ſilly woman. If I am taking a liberty beyond what you think me entitled to, in obtruding my advice and opinion unaſked, tell me ſo candidly, and I will reſerve my interference, till a longer intercourſe of friendſhip has authenticated my claims to your confidence;" and I drily took up a book, feeling myſelf really offended with the ſentiments he had ventured to inſinuate.

"Forgive me, Miſs Riverſdale!" he exclaimed, "I ſee you are offended—believe me my offence is involuntary; it is the conſciouſneſs of my own weakneſs, and dread of betraying what you would not chooſe to hear, that induces me to ſhun theſe bewitching converſations;—I have no reſource but to fly your preſence."

"If, indeed, our converſations are to take

a turn of this kind, it is highly proper to avoid them; and you may depend, Sir, upon my utmoſt concurrence."

"That tone and look annihilate me!—Do not, for pity's ſake, impute to me the preſumptuous intention to utter a ſyllable that could offend you—indeed I would not ſully the purity of your mind by wilfully breathing a complaint of the miſeries I endure; but this dangerous recurrence to ſubjects, that call up my feelings, throws me off my guard."

"I ſhall certainly be more upon mine in future; though it will grieve my heart to forego an intereſt ſo very dear to me; for if I do not ſpeak to you of Madame de Sainval, who will?"

"O, name her not!" he interrupted, "the very ſound is poiſon to my ears at this moment. Whenever I find myſelf more rational, I ſhall beg to have recourſe to you; but at preſent I have no remedy but flight."

And ſo ſaying, he in great agitation left me.

To day he has not dined at home; and to morrow goes into his month of waiting at

Verſailles, which he has contrived to exchange; in the common courſe it would not have taken place till June.

Alas! my dear brother, how I grieve for my friend! How different the fate ſhe merits! Where could another man be found, inſenſible to charms like hers! And of all that has paſſed I dare not tell her one word, leſt ſhe ſhould interfere, and preclude me from making what ſhe will call humiliating conceſſions on her part.

18*th*.—O! Henry! I fear we have diſcovered—too ſurely diſcovered, the clew of Mr. Stanville's conduct—it is only a ſurmiſe, however, of Sir George Rutland's,—it may not be exactly as he apprehends; but ſtill, if not—it is equally deſtructive of my hopes.—Hopes, did I ſay!—Loſt—loſt Louiſa!

But I am bewildering myſelf and you; let me explain this fatal ſecret.

Madame de Sainval came into my room yeſterday, whilſt I was dreſſing. "Send away Flora, I wiſh to ſpeak to you," ſhe

ſaid, with an appearance of emotion that ſtruck me.

The inſtant the door was ſhut, "I have had a viſit from Sir George Rutland," ſhe added.

"What can he have ſaid to diſturb you ſo much?"

"I could not reſiſt taking the opportunity, to queſtion him in regard to Mr. Stanville—"

"Heavens, Adine!"—I exclaimed, with an emotion at leaſt equal to her own.

"*Raſſurez vous ma Louiſe, je ne vous ai point compromiſe* *."

"O, I do not fear it—but for pity's ſake what have you learnt?"

"Can you bear to hear what may not be quite conſonant to your wiſhes?"

"Any thing, deareſt Adine, better than the torture of ſuſpenſe—"

"Why, then—his friends apprehend, that he is privately married—"

This was more than I was prepared for, and I ſunk back in my chair.

* Make yourſelf eaſy, my Louiſa, I have not involved your dignity.

Upon recollection, I am aſhamed to acknowledge how ſtrongly I was affected. Yet why aſhamed? Surely Mr. Stanville is an excuſe for the weakneſs.

It was a conſiderable time before Madame de Sainval and Flora, whom ſhe had ſummoned to her aſſiſtance, could recover me ſufficiently to reſume the diſtreſſing ſubject.

"I was aware of your having conceived a partiality for Mr. Stanville, and therefore wiſhed as early as poſſible, to aſcertain what might be expected from it," Madame de Sainval ſaid, in a tone of the moſt affectionate concern; "but I had no idea of the hold he has taken upon your heart, or I ſhould have been more guarded in imparting my intelligence."

"No matter, tell me all you know, I can now bear any thing."

"All that I know amounts but to conjecture; his friends have not been able to aſcertain the truth."

"Cruel Adine, then, to ſpeak ſo poſitively!"

"I ſpoke with no more certainty than what I now repeat; only your heart, my love, was ſo ready to take the alarm."

"What did Sir George, then, actually ſay?"

"Sir George did not ſeem willing to ſay any thing, till I urged the ſingularity of his friend's conduct—"

"Adine! in regard to me? You ſaid I was not implicated—"

"Neither are you; truſt me for being as careful of your delicacy, as you could be yourſelf. I only obſerved to him, that there appeared to be a ſingularity in Mr. Stanville, and an ignorance of the commoneſt forms of civility; ſuch as all his wit and ſenſe could ſcarcely make amends for. This attack threw Sir George off his guard, as I intended it ſhould; and in his zeal to defend his friend, he betrayed the very circumſtance of which I had before endeavoured in vain, to come at the knowledge. He entreated me not to judge by what I now ſaw of Mr. Stanville, for that he was acting under very viſible conſtraint, ariſing, perhaps, from the too powerful impreſſion of Miſs Riverſdale's charms: at leaſt he ſuſpected this; he was not in the ſecret, if he were, he ſhould not feel himſelf at liberty to ſpeak. 'Is he, then, not independant and free to indulge an admiration ſo

properly placed?' I ſaid. 'Ah, my dear Madam, that is a queſtion I wiſh I could ſolve,' he replied; 'but though all his friends ſee reaſon to apprehend his being privately married, he is ſo very reſerved upon the ſubject, that not one of us has ever been able to obtain light into it.' 'Some diſgraceful connexion, probably?' I obſerved.—'Of that we know nothing: not even his ſiſter ſeems to be in his confidence.' And this was all that paſſed, my Louiſa; which ſtill you ſee amounts to nothing like a certainty."

I could not anſwer; indeed I knew not what to ſay; my thoughts were all confuſion.

Madame de Sainval ſaid ſhe would leave me to myſelf for a while, and thought I had better not attempt to go down to dinner: ſhe would order a chicken into my own room, and excuſe me to her mother, upon pretence of a head-ach.

It was, indeed, very ſoon no pretence; a very ſevere one came on, and obliged me to go to bed, where the darkneſs and quiet always ſoothe me, although I obtain no reſt.

To day I am only "ſick at heart," my deareſt brother; but it is a cruel diſorder;

little did I know, when I braved it, of what I was talking—but I did not brave it, did I? I only prayed to be ſaved from the trial: and I yet hope to ſhow you, that I ſhall not weakly yield my peace of mind, without ſtruggling, at leaſt, to the utmoſt.

I imagine the moſt effectual plan will be to avoid ſpeaking or writing upon the dangerous ſubject: for even ſuppoſing him not to be actually married, which you ſee appears uncertain, ſtill there is undoubtedly an engagement of a nature ſo inſurmountable, as to force him to ſtruggle againſt *inclination;* for *that* Sir George ſuſpects to be in my favour.—I own to you, Henry, I feel a ſlight conſolation, however, in the idea of not having been wholly diſregarded—but enough of Mr. Stanville.

Lord and Lady Grantin are daily expected in Paris, on their way to London. The Marquis of Egmore agrees to a reconciliation, and receives them into his houſe, and will make a handſome ſettlement upon them, provided his daughter-in-law anſwers to his ſon's account of her. I ſincerely hope he may not ſee her with my eyes.

18*th*.—Sir George Rutland is very aſſiduous in his viſits; more ſo than I could wiſh: he is a worthy man, whom I highly eſteem, but with whom I do not feel myſelf at eaſe. I dare not enter with him upon the topic that fills my thoughts; and every other appears ſo totally devoid of intereſt, that I am apt to continue ſilent, till Madame de Sainval's looks, call upon me to ſpeak; and then —I know not what to ſay: it ſeems as if all my ideas had fled with Mr. Stanville; for I believe he is gone.

He did not call to take leave; only wrote a civil note, to aſk my commands for Lady Belfont, excuſing himſelf on account of the multiplicity of buſineſs; being hurried away ſooner than he had expected. Hurried away! perhaps to his—but no matter who, or what hurried him.—He was to leave Paris to day.

Sir George has called; but I did not dare truſt my voice to inquire; and Madame de Sainval was gone to maſs.

The note was merely a civil one, ſuch as might have been written to any body: hardly that indeed!—for the incivility of not calling ſeemed to require ſomething more than a mere commonplace excuſe of buſineſs. He

has great command over himſelf, I think—or perhaps it requires none, and the ſuppoſition in regard to me is entirely a miſtake. It was the ſame hand-writing with the verſes, however, Henry: I knew it again inſtantly—but even thoſe might have no reference to me—only his embarraſſment certainly looked ſuſpicious—ſingular! that he could not juſt truſt himſelf to ſay Adieu! So deficient to Madame de Sainval, too! you know. I ſhould like to be certain, whether or no he is actually ſet out; I ſhould then trouble myſelf leſs about him.

19*th*.—He is gone—decidedly gone!—but not till this morning; that is twenty-four hours later than he expected, and yet he could not find time—or rather he *would* not. I cannot help thinking this total inattention to propriety a drawback upon his character—leſs ſenſibility, I fancy, than has been attributed to him,—becauſe people of real feelings do not wholly diveſt themſelves of conſideration for others. Any body ſo very—very reaſonable, may be ſuſpected of owing that perfect control over themſelves to

a ſlight degree of inſenſibility. I would not do Mr. Stanville injuſtice; but in general a very temperate mind falls ſhort of *great* virtues; don't you think ſo? I will endeavour to turn this idea to my own advantage; if I could once bring myſelf to ſee him in a leſs amiable light, I ſhould ſoon recover my peace; for believe me, my dear brother, his outſide, handſome, noble, intereſting as it may be reckoned, is what my thoughts leaſt dwell upon: it is only when his ſoul ſpeaks in his eyes, that they become ſo very irreſiſtible. You never told me what very remarkable eyes he has; nor yet mentioned that peculiar variety of expreſſion, which ſo eminently diſtinguiſhes his countenance. Always handſome, indeed, but lighting up ſo wonderfully according to the ſubject that inſpires him; and then his dark, ſtraight eyebrow, ſo characteriſtic of ſenſe: Lavater lays great ſtreſs upon that, you know. Madame de Sainval objects to the height of his forehead, the darkneſs of his complexion—now theſe are the very circumſtances, that give the laſt finiſh of character to a manly face. I could not have conceived, that Madame de Sainval would

have thought an inſipid, roſe and lily man, handſome. I ſhould make you a complete convert to Lavater, if I could point out to you how accurately his indications of genius correſpond with Mr. Stanville's features.—— But how is it that I for ever recur to this ſubject! Well—he is now gone, and that puts an end to it.

I will tranſcribe for you a letter juſt received from Prince Polinſki—not however to day; I do not find myſelf in a writing humour.

20*th*.—Lord and Lady Grantin are arrived. I ſaw him for an inſtant. She muſt have ſome very ſerious converſation with me, ſhe ſays, but it will employ an hour or two at leaſt, and that cannot be for this week to come, ſhe has ſo much to do to equip herſelf upon her firſt arrival.

How tantaliſing! what can ſhe have to talk to me upon! ſurely Mr. Stanville has not written any thing to her!—She ſeemed extremely diſappointed in not finding him here. He is a great favourite of hers, and a fine ſpirited fellow, ſhe ſays. She hopes I have

not ſpoiled him for a flirt; and then I thought ſhe looked arch—but that might be fancy.

A flirt! how I hate the name! were he capable of flirting, as it is called, I ſhould never have beſtowed a ſecond thought upon him; but ſhe talks in this ſtyle of every body. I think I like her ſtill leſs now ſhe is married, than I did before.

She was juſt getting into her carriage as we drove up, and all that I have related, and much more, paſſed in the hearing of the ſervants, while ſhe had one foot upon the ſtep of her coach, and reſted her hand upon the arm of a very ſmart looking man, whom ſhe has brought with her from Turin; and after introducing him to me by the name of Count Caravallo, ſhe got into the coach, and he with her, and ordered her coachman to the Bois de Boulogne.

And of Lord Grantin not a word; ſhe was in ſuch haſte, ſhe did not give me time to inquire.

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* 22*d.*—Sir George Rutland had a long converſation yeſterday evening with Madame de

Sainval; the ſubject, your Louiſa. He wiſhed to know whether ſhe believed my affections to be diſengaged, and whether ſhe would intereſt herſelf with me, in his favour. He ſtated to her his fortune, ſituation, connexions; all not only unexceptionable, but brilliant, beyond what I am entitled to, certainly. His relations have long been urgent with him to marry; he had not before met with a woman, who anſwered to what he wiſhed to find in a wife. He expreſſed an opinion of me highly flattering, and which entitles him to my gratitude—but alas, my dear brother! this is all the return I can make.

Madame de Sainval did not give the deciſive anſwer for me, which ſhe might have done: indeed, I apprehend ſhe is biaſſed by Sir George's character and fortune, to withhold her concurrence in the explicit ſincerity with which I wiſh to treat him: ſhe referred him to myſelf, as if the matter admitted of a doubt. I ſhould have been very thankful, had ſhe ſpared me the painful taſk of giving a denial to a worthy man; there is, however, no help for it.

Observe, Henry, that I quit my pen without having said one word of Mr. Stanville.

23*d*.—Lady Grantin has just left me, and I would give you a month to guess what she has taken into her head.

She began, "I hope that you are quite disengaged this morning, for I am come to have some very serious conversation with you."

I told her, "I was at her service;" not without some little trepidation, I acknowledge.

"Have you heard from Prince Polinski, since the letter which I forwarded to you?"

"I received one from Naples last week."

"Well! and the contents?"

"Satisfactory, as friendship and esteem can make them."

"FRIENDSHIP and ESTEEM, of course; those are the received expressions, you know, which always pass current, without ever deceiving any one. And what proposals, pray, does his *friendship* venture to suggest to your *purity*?"

"I really am at a loſs to underſtand your ladyſhip."

"That is of courſe, too. You are no changeling, my dear Riverſdale, I perceive: however, I now come determined to baffle your reſerves, and ſerve you, in your heart's deareſt concerns, whether you will or no."

"You are very obliging; but indeed, Lady Grantin, you are much miſtaken if you believe my heart to have any concern with Prince Polinſki, that requires the intervention of a third perſon."

"O, you arch hypocrite! how you might impoſe upon a leſs clear-ſighted perſon than myſelf, and how rightly ſhould I ſerve you, to lock up all I have to ſay in my own boſom, and treat you as you do me! but my open, generous nature, impells me to befriend you, in ſpite of yourſelf; and ſince you will avow nothing, I muſt proceed upon what I know from other quarters. Prince Polinſki, being at liberty from the engagement he had contracted—"

"At liberty!" I interrupted, with unaffected ſurpriſe, "is the lady then dead?"—

"For grief at the news of his inconſtancy, do you mean? No, believe me,

"*Dans nôtre ſiècle une femme*
A plus de force d'eſprit *;"

ſhe has acted a far more rational part; thought he was dilatory in coming to claim her promiſe, and ſo took another huſband in the interim, that's all. And now you wiſh me to believe that I am imparting the firſt intelligence of this, do you, my dear?"

"I ſhould think the apparent ſurpriſe with which I liſten to your ladyſhip might convince you."

"It convinces me that you are a very pretty actreſs, however; ſo waving that point, I ſhall proceed with my commiſſion."

"And is your commiſſion, then, from Prince Polinſki?" I exclaimed, with a ſenſe of diſappointment, for which, upon reflexion, I know not how to account: aſſuredly I could not expect that *ſhe* would have been employed for any body elſe.

I ſuppoſe I looked what I felt; for ſhe re-

* In theſe days a woman has more ſtrength of mind. Quoted from an old, and not very delicate, French ſong.

plied, with a very provoking air, "Upon my life, Riverſdale, you do this well: any one who had not been witneſs to what I have ſeen, might be the dupe of it; but I am not quite ſo eaſily blinded; though I ſhould ſerve you right if I pretended to be ſo, and withheld my communications, upon a ſubject ſo *very unintereſting* as not to be worth *detaining* your *attention upon;* for the Prince's ſake, however, I ſhall pocket my revenge for ſome other opportunity, and proceed with what I have to ſay."

"Your ladyſhip really quite miſconceives me; I have no wiſh to appear indifferent as to what may relate to a man for whom I profeſs ſincere eſteem."

"O, you have not! well, then, tranſlating the word *eſteem* into the vulgar tongue, *id eſt*, Love; allow me to aſk which, of your *amorous*, or your *religious* creed, has the ſtrongeſt hold upon your mind?—You do not care to anſwer ſo plain a propoſition, I perceive" (for I really was thunderſtruck at the queſtion); "well, then, to conform to your little mealy-mouthed habits, do you feel yourſelf the *Emma*, to make every ſacrifice to your *Henry?*"

"And is it poſſible, Lady Grantin, that Prince Polinſki can have ſo far forgotten himſelf, as to commiſſion *you* to aſk *me* this queſtion?"

"O lord! O lord! you are ſo deſperately ſcrupulous, there's no knowing how to deal with you. Why no, he certainly did not actually deſire me to aſk it; nor, indeed, to confeſs the truth, did he ever open his lips to me upon the ſubject at all. You are very well matched there, he is as ſly and as reſerved as yourſelf.—But what of that? a good-natured, kind hearted friend, like me, who am always ready to do as I would be done by, don't ſtay to be told in ſo many words what is wiſhed for; however, to ſet your wondrous delicacy at eaſe, the fact is ſimply this: *My* friend, Count Caravallo, is very intimate with *your* friend the Prince, and through him I know that the Prince's engagement is at an end, and that the only impediment to his offering his hand, where his heart is ſo entirely devoted, ariſes from the difference of religion; but for that, he would have immediately flown to the feet of his charmer. Now I, who am fully aware of your attachment to the Prince, and believe

you to be poſſeſſed of too much ſenſe to be bigotted to one form of worſhip preferably to another, thought that, by betraying this little circumſtance to you, I might be the means of making two friends happy; for the ſlighteſt favourable hint from the Count to the Prince, would infallibly bring him upon the wings of love—"

"I muſt feel indebted to your ladyſhip's kind intentions, but moſt earneſtly entreat they may ſtop at what has now paſſed. Prince Polinſki, you ſee, has underſtood me better than to venture to ſuggeſt ſuch a propoſal; and if Count Caravallo communicates at all with him, I beg he may not be informed that Lady Grantin could think ſo ill of me, as to hint at a thing of the kind."

"Think ſo *ill!* If ſuſpecting you of having ſtrong affections, and being exempt from narrow prejudices, is thinking *ill* of you, I really muſt learn a new leſſon in language and ſentiment, before I venture to diſcuſs ſuch a ſubject with you again; for, to tell you the truth, I was paying you a compliment, according to my poor apprehenſion, which I ſhould have been highly flattered to receive myſelf."

" I am always ready to take a thing in the light it is meant, Lady Grantin; and without diſcuſſing what *ſtrong affections*, attended with *exemption from prejudices*, might lead to, I ſhall only ſay, that I am not ambitious of attaining to ſuch preeminence, but, on the contrary, very particularly anxious that Prince Polinſki may not be led to ſuſpect me of a philoſophic ſuperiority, ſo greatly beyond my pretenſions."

" Upon my life, Riverſdale, you take this in ſo different a light from what I could have ſuppoſed, and ſport ideas ſo very confined, that I begin to think I have miſtaken you altogether, and that you are only fit to become a parſon's wife, and retire into ſome ſequeſtered parſonage, there to aſſiſt ſpouſy, to compoſe his orthodox ſabbath-day admonitions, and watch over the morals of his ruſtic charge, and viſit the ſick, and comfort the afflicted, and bear him a child every year, and ſuckle it.—Ah Gad! the very thoughts of ſuch a life makes me ſick; I muſt fly to Caravallo to recover my ſpirits, for I declare a converſation with you is enough to give me a fit of the vapours at any time; and it actually is the very hour at which I appointed

him to attend me on horſeback to the *Bois de Boulogne.*"

And away ſhe flew, leaving me not a little ſurpriſed at what had paſſed, and almoſt as much diſturbed at the eaſy confidential footing upon which ſhe affects to be with Count Caravallo, as with her unaccountable propoſal in regard to the Prince.

Why he ſhould have left it to Lady Grantin, to inform *his friend*, Louiſa Riverſdale, of the diſſolution of his engagement, I do not quite underſtand, nor is my mind at leiſure to inveſtigate: one only anxiety occurs upon the ſubject: it is not, I truſt, poſſible, that, in revolving the paſt, he ſhould ſee any cauſe to fear that the communication ſhould awaken thoughts in me of the nature to which Lady Grantin alludes. Such a ſuppoſition would, indeed, lower me, and mortify me in the extreme—but I am ſure I wrong him in admitting the idea for a moment.

24th.—Lady Grantin introduced an entertaining character here laſt night. A Frenchwoman, her *particular friend*, who values herſelf upon preferring every thing that is

Engliſh to every thing that is French; and whom it is her ladyſhip's favourite amuſement to expoſe.

The Vicomteſſe de Lanfranc's reaſon for wiſhing at this moment to be introduced to Madame de Sainval, was the having been told that there was an Engliſhwoman ſtaying in the houſe with her. She has already, it ſeems, made more than one attempt to this effect; but Madame de Sainval had ſhown herſelf ſo averſe, that none of her own *coterie* would undertake it. Lady Grantin, however, did not know this, or did not care, and brought her, *de but en blanc*, to the diverſion of the whole company, and Count Caravallo in their ſuite.

The Vicomteſſe would be a very affected Frenchwoman, if ſhe confined herſelf to her national and natural abſurdities; and to theſe ſhe ſubjoins all that the moſt miſtaken *Angloманie* can ſupply her with. Her uſual evening dreſs, in her own ſociety, is a riding-habit; and as ſhe had dined in a friendly way with Lady Grantin, and taken her *en petit loge* to the *Italiens*, Lady Grantin had maliciouſly perſuaded her that her *coſtume* was quite appropriate, according to Engliſh

ideas, to an accidental call upon Madame de Sainval, who ſhe believed would be nearly alone: the *coterie*, however, happening to ſup here, the joke ſucceeded beyond her own hopes.

The peculiarity of her appearance would probably have raiſed a titter and a whiſper in an Engliſh company, that would ſoon have made her ſenſible of the impropriety; but here, where *ſavoir vivre* curbs every natural expreſſion, all external appearance of ſurpriſe was checked; and it was only by "*un petit mot de perſifflage*," now and then addreſſed to herſelf, that ſhe was pointed out to ridicule.

Lady Grantin introduced us to each other. "A fault that will immediately ſtrike you in Miſs Riverſdale, Viſcounteſs," ſaid ſhe, "is, that ſhe ſpeaks French as well as ſhe does Engliſh."

"Ah! but, at all events," the Viſcounteſs replied, "it muſt be that ſhe gives ſo great preference to her own tongue, that I ſhall be happy to make my court to her, in ſpeaking it."

I was aſtoniſhed at her pronunciation: it is ſo good, that her idiom is really the only

thing that betrays her not being an Engliſh-woman.

I ſaid, that the preferable language to me was always that which was moſt agreeable to the company I happened to be in.

"Ah, you are very polite; but it is impoſſible to compare our inſignificant jargon with the energy and richneſs of the Engliſh."

"Perhaps in writing we have the advantage; but in converſation there is a playful animated grace in the French—"

"Ah fie!" ſhe interrupted, "you do not deſerve the honour to be Engliſh, if you ſee any thing good in any other nation."

"Don't give Madame de Lanfranc credit for that ſpeech, Miſs Riverſdale," cried Lady Grantin; "ſhe means it as a ſtroke of ſatire, and fair enough too."

"Jeſu Maria!" exclaimed Madame de Lanfranc, "none but you, my lady, will ſuſpect me ever to find fault with your nation. What I would ſay was very clear; and I am ſo perſuaded myſelf of Engliſh ſuperiority, that I never ſuffer my daughter to hear another language. My own woman, her governeſs, my jockey, who are the only ſervants that approach her, are all Engliſh; and

I have the pleaſure to ſay, that ſhe is as perfectly ignorant of her mother tongue, as if ſhe had never been in France."

" *C'eſt inouï!*" exclaimed Madame de Sainval, laughing, who had juſt come towards us, " *comment vous prétendez que ce ſoit un mérite à Mademoiſelle votre fille, que de ne pas ſavoir ſa langue! Mais ſi elle eſt deſtinée à paſſer ſa vie en France autant vaudroit il, qu'elle fut ſourde ou muëtte* *."

" Heaven preſerve my child from the misfortune to paſs her life in France!" replied the Viſcounteſs. " I have taken means to aſſure the contrary, by propoſing her in marriage to Mylord Lillingborough for his ſon; and every thing is agreed between us."

" Lord Lillingborough, my dear!" cried Lady Grantin; " why his ſon is not above twelve years old now, and the greateſt blackguard at Eton; reſiding in the north of Ireland, beſides."

" Ah, that comes to the ſame; England or Ireland, I make no difference."

* It is inconceivable that you ſhould reckon it a merit in your daughter not to underſtand her own language; if ſhe be to paſs her life in France, ſhe might as well be deaf and dumb.

"*We* do a good deal, though, I can tell you," ſaid Lady Grantin, laughing; "but you ſhould have your daughter taught to play at cricket, if you intend to match her with Lord Sligo."

"Do not believe I have neglected that," replied Madame de Lanfranc, very gravely; "my jockey is of the Duke of ———'s ſchool, and ſurpaſſes all his contemporaries in activity and ſkill."

"And he actually gives leſſons to your daughter?" ſaid Lady Grantin.

"Aſſuredly; and to my daughter's mother likewiſe, and learns us to ride in the Engliſh faſhion, beſides."

"To riſe in your ſaddle, and leap a five-barred gate, I ſuppoſe?" laughing.

"Ah, that will come certainly; we are not ſo far yet. You laugh, Lady Grantin, becauſe you have been ſo long from your own country, you forget its cuſtoms; but my friend, Lady Wellington, told me at Spa, it is the firſt perfection in an Engliſh lady to hunt the foxes; and her father was ſo eager for her to excel in it, that ſhe was ſet on horſeback before ſhe could walk, and could call off the dogs before ſhe ſpoke plain."

" And had knocked out three of her teeth, by a fall in leaping, and loſt the uſe of her thumb, by the burſting of her gun, before ſhe was fifteen," added Lady Grantin, laughing: " ſhe reached perfection very early."

" That is the fortune of war," Madame de Lanfranc replied; " but ſuch accidents are rare; and I know very well that moſt Engliſh ladies paſs one half of their time among horſes and dogs: and the laſt lady with whom my jockey lived, declared ſhe conſidered them as more conducive to health, and more rational alſo, than half the fine people in London."

" And we are, perhaps, more indebted than we ſuſpect to the indulgence of theſe ſtable and kennel propenſities, for the great improvements of late in the breed of our nobility," ſaid Lady Grantin.

" Lady Grantin always puts malice every where," ſaid the Viſcounteſs to me.

Madame de Sainval inquired whether Madame de Lanfranc played triſette, boſton, or loto.—

She never played any game but backgammon or all-fours.

"What were thoſe? Could I play them?" Madame de Sainval aſked.

I really did not know either.

"Jeſu Maria! what affectation in an Engliſhwoman!" the Viſcounteſs exclaimed.

"Miſs Riverſdale is excuſable," Lady Grantin obſerved; "ſhe has been out of England ever ſince ſhe was ſix years old."

This viſibly lowered my conſequence with Madame de Lanfranc.

Lady Grantin then ſat down to all-fours with the Viſcounteſs, aſſuring her that it was the only game played in the faſhionable circles in London, and pinned Count Caravallo down to her elbow to teach it him.

Madame de Lanfranc called for a glaſs of *eau ſucrée* *, and drank it off.

"*Ah mon Dieu, que c'eſt Anglais* †!" exclaimed my partner.

"*Mais je vous demande ſi on peut pouſſer l'Anglomanie à ce point de mal honnêteté la* ‡?" ſaid another.

* Cold water, in which ſome lumps of ſugar are diſſolved.

† Good God! how Engliſh!

‡ But is it conceivable that the Anglomania can be carried to ſuch a height of indecorum?

"I believed *eau ſucrée* not to be a *boiſſon Anglaiſe*," I ſaid; and entreated to be informed in what its extreme *mal-honnêteté* conſiſted?

Was it poſſible that I, who was ſo well bred, did not know that it was contrary to all the rules of decency to call for drink between meals, without at leaſt aſking the permiſſion of the lady of the houſe, and drinking it in a corner, with your back to the company?

How fortunate that I ſaved the credit of my good breeding, by not happening to be thirſty, for my perfect ignorance of this peculiarity might have led me into the very ſame breach of decorum; but then I ſhould have met with compaſſionate indulgence, from really being an Engliſh woman.

When ſupper was announced, it opened a new ſource of amuſement. Madame de Lanfranc would not quit her game, and deſired that her jockey (whom ſhe always carries about with her to wait behind her chair at meals, as others do their footman) might bring her a beef-ſteak into the ſallon.

Martel looked puzzled; but as it ſeems to be a rule with a Frenchman never to ac-

knowledge himſelf at a loſs, he walked off without aſking any queſtions, and ordered the jackquè of Madame de la Vicomteſſe to carry her *de la betrave* *.

She was indignant at the miſtake, and more ſo to find that there was no ſuch thing to be had, although ſhe offered her jockey to Madame de Sainval, to inſtruct her cook how to do it: ſhe could not have conceived that, with an Engliſhwoman in the houſe, there could have been any doubt of getting a beef-ſteak, or ſhe ſhould not have been guilty of ſuch an indiſcretion as to mention it; however, a *Welch rabbit* would do as well; which, with the aſſiſtance of Flora, was procured; and for porter ſhe was at no loſs, as her jockey always takes a bottle of it with him for her wherever ſhe goes.

All this, improved upon, and made the moſt of, by Lady Grantin's wickedneſs, was more laughable than I can repreſent it upon paper.

Madame de Lanfranc has made a point of our going to drink tea, *à l'Anglaiſe*, and ſup with her on Saturday; from which Lady

* Beet root.

Grantin foreſees great diverſion, and would not let Madame de Sainval excuſe herſelf, as ſhe was much inclined to do.

Among other inducements for accepting the invitation, Lady Grantin told me it was my only chance for ſeeing my old friend, Lord Grantin, who is *attaché au char* of the Counteſs de Senlis, Madame de Lanfranc's ſiſter; a far prettier woman, and a charming muſician. "You may wonder," ſhe added, "at my making ſuch favourable mention of a rival; but the truth is, that I am exceſſively obliged to her for taking him off my hands, for he is really grown ſo intolerably jealous, and obſtinately wrong-headed of late, that, to be candid with you, my dear Riverſdale, I am by no means the happy woman I expected to be; and have much to ſay to you upon that ſubject, when I can find an opportunity."

But I am not very anxious to afford this opportunity, my dear brother; for I ſee very clearly, that the part of Lady Grantin's confidante is neither reputable nor deſirable: I have little chance of doing her good, and ſhe might (at leaſt in the eye of the world) do me much evil.

You are probably ſurpriſed at not hearing any thing of Monſieur de Sainval's ſiſter all this while, Madame de Balſins, from whoſe *petite maitriſe*, and pretenſions to ſcience, you would expect ſome amuſement; but ſhe lives quite in a different *coterie* from that of the Marchioneſs, and except occaſionally coming to eat her *poulet* here, after which ſhe condeſcends to *faire la partie* of Madame de Valence at piquet, until the *heur du ſpectacle*, we ſee nothing of her.

25*th*.—Did you know, dear Henry, that Lady Belfont had any foreign connexions?—Sir George Rutland propoſes to Madame de Sainval, to ſhow me Saint-Cyr, where he is commiſſioned by Mr. Stanville to ſee a nun, whom he believes to be his relation—Mr. Stanville's relation, I mean, and of courſe Lady Belfont's: it is odd ſhe ſhould not have mentioned her—

Sir George cannot be admitted beyond the *parloir* of courſe; but would requeſt of Madame de Remines to ſhow us the interiour of the convent. Madame de Sainval has never ſeen it herſelf, and urges me to go: I

ſhould like it, but heſitate from unwillingneſs to throw myſelf unneceſſarily into Sir George Rutland's way, who diſcovers an increaſing partiality, that is very diſtreſſing to me. Madame de Sainval contends, that it is affected in me to decline it—

And here ſhe comes to tell me the carriage is at the door, and ſhe will take no denial—

26*th*.—We were highly gratified with the ſight of Saint-Cyr; but our curioſity is on the rack.—Madame de Remines is *not* related to Mr. Stanville, but nearly connected with ſome one in whom he is deeply intereſted, as we gueſs—though perhaps that may not be the caſe either—

However, you ſhall hear.

Sir George went in firſt, alone, and returned to us in about ten minutes, with a civil meſſage from Madame de Remines. We were conducted into the parloir, where we found her behind the *grille*. What a melancholy ſenſation does the ſight of it inſpire! I never was in a nunnery before. Her appearance, however, might reconcile

one to it; ſhe looked cheerful and contented. She held an intereſting little girl by the hand, who inſtantly caught Madame de Sainval's fancy; and upon inquiry, finding it to be the daughter of a friend in Dauphinè, ſhe requeſted the child to be ſpared to her for the day.

Madame de Remines regretted ſhe could not oblige her. "We have to thank your friend, Sir," to Sir George, "for having loſt the diſcretionary power of complying with ſuch requeſts: the rigour of every convent in and about Paris has been increaſed by his *eſclandre*; and well were it for him that this proved its worſt conſequence—"

Sir George coloured—looked embarraſſed, and evidently wiſhing to interrupt her, ſaid, "My good mother, will you take compaſſion upon theſe ladies, who are dying with impatient curioſity to ſee the interiour of this celebrated community? I have given them hopes of obtaining this favour from your indulgence."

With the moſt obliging readineſs ſhe agreed to the propoſal; and ſeeming equally unconſcious of Sir George's embarraſſment, and of the inquiſitive looks of ſurpriſe which

had rivetted Madame de Sainval's penetrating eyes upon her, ſhe went round to meet us at the door which the *fourière* had now opened for us.

That *I* partook in the ſurpriſe, as well as in the anxiety, you will not doubt; I truſt, however, I did not ſhow it.

We entered this magnificent building with a ſenſe of awe and veneration, which we mutually acknowledged to each other afterwards, and accounted for, by our reſpect and admiration for Madame de Sevignè, whoſe frequent and impreſſive mention of this eſtabliſhment confers a claſſical dignity upon it.

Madame de Remines led the way to Madame de Maintenon's apartment, where her bed—her arm-chair—her table—her inkſtand—nay, the very pen ſhe had laſt written with, are left, with religious reverence, in the ſame ſpot and ſituation as during her lifetime. Soeur Théréſe, and ſoeur Urſule, had now joined la mère de Remines, to aſſiſt in doing the honours of the foundation; and their affection and reverence for their founder flowed in full chorus with ſuch copious rapidity, that it was difficult to ſelect any real information relative to her from it. She

ſeemed ſtill ſo perfectly alive in their minds, as almoſt to obliterate the idea in ours, that ſhe had been dead near a century; and it was ſcarce poſſible to eſcape the contagion of their enthuſiaſm. We viſited her tomb:—her picture decorates various parts of the houſe, and has an expreſſion of mild, pious lovelineſs, which I was not prepared to expect in it.

Every part of the inſtitution is ſtill carried on upon *her* original plan: and it is extraordinary to ſee what attention ſhe paid to confirming, by practice, the maxims of the ſtricteſt domeſtic economy. It could hardly have been expected, that, where nobility is an indiſpenſable requiſite for admiſſion, every ſpecies of houſewifery ſhould be practically inculcated, even to the waſhing and getting up their own linen; and upon this groundwork, the good nuns ſuperinduce as much of accompliſhments as they are themſelves miſtreſſes of; for maſters are not admitted within the walls: they ſing, therefore, and dance, as in the time of Lewis the Fourteenth, which is a curioſity in itſelf. They alſo recite and declaim little dramatic moral dialogues; but not, I believe, quite in the

ſtyle that they formerly acted Eſther and Athalie, or Madame de Sevignè would have been leſs rapturous in their praiſe: of this, however, I ſpeak more from Madame de Sainval's opinion than my own, as my attention was juſt then called off, by the appearance of a whiſper between her and the Mere de Remines, which forcibly ſtruck me to relate, to what had paſſed in the *parloir:* I was, however, miſtaken, but my thoughts were ſo abſorbed, as to make me perfectly unmindful of what was going on, till the bell for veſpers rouſed me from my reverie, by the ſudden ſtop and commotion it occaſioned; when the girls, inſtantly arranging themſelves by two and two into their claſſes, which are diſtinguiſhed by different coloured ribands, proceeded to the chapel. Had we any objection to ſee them at their devotions?—it was, on the contrary, what we wiſhed.

We were ſhown into the *tribune* of the good old Lady Abbeſs, who, by her appearance, might almoſt have paſſed for a contemporary of Madame de Maintenon; and it was not the leaſt curious part of our entertainment, to ſee the accuracy with which the *élèves* performed the evolutions of kneeling,

riſing, and turning round to the ſtroke of a hammer. Would not our good dean have ſaid, upon this occaſion, What was to be expected from a religion thus *hammered* into them? or is this pun even too bad for him?

From the chapel they again proceeded, by two and two, to the refectoire; and upon our obſerving the extreme quietneſs with which they proceeded, "*Nos demoiſelles n'ont la liberté de parler qu'aux heures de récréation**," ſaid ſoeur Thereſe.

Madame de Remines obſerved, with complacency, upon this peculiarity of their inſtitution.

"*Ouida!*" cried the Marchioneſs, "*vantez vous de ravir ainſi au ſexe ſes droits? vous ne ſavez donc pas ma mère, qu'à leur entrée dans le monde, il en reſulte une indigeſtion de paroles, qu'on appelle, le mal de* Saint Cyr †."

* Our young ladies have the liberty of converſing only at play hours.

† Truly you have cauſe to boaſt of thus robbing the ſex of its privilege! You are probably not aware, my good mother, of the alarming conſequences that ariſe from it upon their entrance into the world. Young ladies are liable to a diſorder, occaſioned by an indigeſtion of words, which goes by the name of the Diſeaſe of St. Cyr.

"*Madame la Marquiſe Cadine*," the good mother, anſwered; "but the fact is, that the habit of ſilence becomes ſo natural to them, that I have been told, an élève of Saint Cyr may always be recognized in the great world by the temperance of her tongue, as well as by the ſtrictneſs of her moral conduct, which I have ſcarcely ever heard a deviation from."

"The inſtance of Sir George Rutland's friend, to which you alluded in the *parloir*, had then, probably, ſome very peculiar circumſtances attending it?" interrupted Madame de Sainval.

"It did not occur in *our* convent," replied Madame de Remines; "indeed it *could* not—but I was going to mention another very particular attention we pay to our young ladies—"

"Excuſe my interrupting you, *ma mère*," ſaid Madame de Sainval; "but I am very particularly intereſted in what relates to Sir George Rutland's friend, and have a ſingular curioſity to know the event to which you ſo pointedly alluded; and, as it did not occur in your own convent, you are ſurely at liberty to . . ."

"Excuſe *me*, my dear lady, if I make exception, upon this occaſion, to the generally received opinion of the indiſcreet communicativeneſs belonging to a life of ſeclusion. Had I any thing favourable to tell, I might be leſs guarded; but a tale of ſcandal ſhall never originate with the Mère de Remines."

Madame de Sainval looked diſconcerted, and made ſome indiſtinct apology for her indiſcretion; and I felt—I really, my dear brother, cannot deſcribe to you what—certainly a little diſappointed.

Madame de Remines reſumed the ſubject neareſt her heart, and ſaid, that what they paid the ſtricteſt attention to, and conſidered as of the greateſt efficacy towards ſecuring a girl's morals, was the never ſuffering them to be for an inſtant alone; for that was always the time ſeized upon by the evil ſpirit to inſtil miſchief into their minds; and this is ſo rigorouſly adhered to, that if a young perſon were but ſent into the next room to fetch a ſkain of thread, another is directed to accompany her.

Upon afterwards mentioning this to Sir George, he recollected an illiberal idea of

Doctor Johnson's to the same effect; but I cannot now tell you exactly where, or what.

We had the pleasure to obtain a holiday for the élèves (which is a favour never refused to visitors from curiosity, as they rarely occur, for it requires particular interest to obtain admittance), and saw them run at liberty in their large fine garden, jump, and *talk* without restraint, and indeed without measure. I should not omit to mention their dress, which is like that of charity children, but either peculiarly unbecoming, or young French women are plainer than those of any other nation I have happened to see; for they have not even the youthful grace, that is independent of actual beauty, roundness of form, and freshness of complexion.

At our return into the parloir, where the grille again separated us from our conductresses, Sir George had his watch in his hand, and with an evident look of anxiety (as it struck both Madame de Sainval and myself, lest the former conversation should be renewed) he hastily said, "I fear we are past the hour at which I heard the Marchioness appoint Leonard."

She thanked him, with an ironical ſmile, for his attention; and we took our leave.

But Madame de Remines's words to Sir George, as we went out of the door, when ſhe probably believed us to be out of hearing, arreſted our ſteps. "Heaven forgive him!" ſaid ſhe, "for impeding *une ſi belle vocation*; I never can."

I felt myſelf turn pale, and my heart almoſt ceaſed to beat: Madame de Sainval, by an involuntary ſtart, ſhowed that the ſame idea had ſtruck her. I hurried into the carriage. Sir George led the converſation to the regulations of Saint Cyr.

"I have always entertained doubts, in regard to Madame de Maintenon's merits," ſaid Madame de Sainval; "but ſurely this one inſtitution ought to immortalize them. Such admirable regulations, ſuch judicious attention to the moſt minute things! and yet, it ſeems, even theſe have been known to fail," ſignificantly.

"In the great number, it is impoſſible that an exception ſhould not occaſionally ariſe; but I really have heard it remarked, by ſenſible Frenchmen, that in general you may

know a lady of Saint Cyr by the dignity and propriety of her manners and conduct."

Was it to your kind concern for my appearance at the Ducheſs de L——s great ſupper to night, my good Sir?" ſaid Madame de Sainval, "or to the fear of Madame de Remines's indiſcretion, that I am indebted for your recollection of my appointment with Leonard?"

"I candidly confeſs," replied Sir George, "that I did not wiſh the good mother to recur to a ſubject that might expoſe a friend to blame."

"*Mr. Stanville* is indebted to you for taking more care of his reputation, than he ſeems to have done himſelf."

I gaſped for breath—I would have given the world to check my friend's well-meant, but ſurely indiſcreet zeal. I touched her foot—

"I do not think that either Madame de Remines, or myſelf, ſaid any thing that could particularly attach to Mr. Stanville," Sir George replied. "She is acquainted with ſeveral of my friends; and I do not feel entitled to vindicate one of them at the ex-

penſe of another. The circumſtance has fortunately made its way but little into the world, owing to the care and ſilence of thoſe immediately concerned. Excuſe me therefore, Madam," very gravely, " if, upon a ſubject of ſo delicate a nature, I conſider myſelf bound to withhold, even from you, information which you ſeem ſo particularly intereſted to obtain."

I ſat upon thorns.

Madame de Sainval was aware ſhe had gone too far, and endeavoured to turn it off in joke. " You are indulgent, indeed, Sir George, if you always give to a woman's idle curioſity the credit of particular meaning. I thank you in the name of my ſex," ſaid ſhe gayly.

He ſmiled, but gave no anſwer; and I much doubt her having ſucceeded in doing away the impreſſion her inquiſitiveneſs had ſeemed to make.

Sir George turned his eyes anxiouſly upon me, as I let down the glaſs for air. The motion of a carriage does, you know, ſometimes make me giddy; and I earneſtly hope he did not attribute to any other cauſe the

frequent changes of colour, of which I was ſenſible in myſelf.

"You are far from ſtrong yet, Louiſa," obſerved the Marchioneſs, wiſhing to account to him for them; "this little excurſion has been almoſt too much for you; I ſhall not take you to the Ducheſs's circle to night."

It was, perhaps, my own conſciouſneſs that interpreted the expreſſion of Sir George Rutland's countenance, at that moment, into incredulity.

Certainly, as he ſays, he has no right to exculpate one friend at the expenſe of another; but why attempt to make a myſtery of a thing that ſtill muſt have made ſome noiſe? ſince Madame de Remines ſaid it had increaſed the watchfulneſs of all the convents in and about Paris. Madame de Sainval is ſure, that, by means of this clew, ſhe ſhall come at it among ſome of her own connections; meanwhile ſhe ſeems inclined to exonerate Mr. Stanville from the ſuſpicion, becauſe Sir George's evident partiality to me, and my no leſs evident preference of Mr. Stanville, muſt very naturally, ſhe thinks, have led him to let the blame have attached

to Mr. Stanville, which he had no hand in affixing, if it really was incurred by him.

And after all, what is it to me, my deareſt brother? I am out of the queſtion, you know, at any rate, that is very clear.

But what does Madame de Sainval mean, by ſaying *my evident preference for Mr. Stanville? evident* only to *herſelf*, I truſt, or it would be too mortifying——

Sir George Rutland ſays, that Mr. Stanville came to Paris with the intention of proceeding to the ſouth of France; but had ſuddenly altered his mind, and returned to England. We had underſtood that he was entruſted by the Ambaſſador with diſpatches of importance; but Sir George did not confirm the idea, that *they* were the cauſe of his change of plan.

There is a ſtrange veil of myſtery hangs around him, and an apparent inconſiſtency—So much the better; I am glad to diſcover his faults, and dwell upon them.—Did I not, however, promiſe you to avoid the ſubject? Ah, how true the ſong!

"——, *penſant qu'il faut qu'on l'oublie*
On s'en ſouvient."

27*th.*—This is Madame de Lanfranc's evening. We ſee Mouſſeau* in the afternoon, and then proceed to her *Thé à l'Anglaiſe.*

I have had an intereſting converſation with Monſieur de Sainval, which gives more ground for hope that I may in time be the fortunate means of bringing about a reconciliation: but it has engroſſed ſo much of the morning, that I cannot now give you the particulars; *à demain*, therefore, for that; I have but half an hour left to dreſs myſelf before dinner; for I cannot adopt the French cuſtom of dining *en déſhabillé* when no other gueſts are expected, but the men who have their daily *couvert:* it has an appearance of ſlovenlineſs, that ſhocks my Engliſh ideas; beſide the extreme unpleaſantneſs of fitting down to your toilette the inſtant you have done eating.

Saturday evening, or rather *Sunday morning*,—for it is paſt one; but a hint

* A country houſe, juſt out of the gates of Paris, that belonged to the late Duke of Orleans.

from the Ambaſſador, that he was diſpatching a meſſenger this morning who could convey my pacquet, joined to the total abſence of any propenſity to ſleep, induces me to finiſh it now.

I left you, to dreſs myſelf; and ſorely did I repent of my having indulged in this ſingularity, when I found only Sir George Rutland in the dining-room with Madame de Sainval, who was literally *en peignoir* *, and retired to her toilette the inſtant ſhe had taken her coffee, where ſhe would not ſuffer us to attend her, on account, ſhe ſaid, of the ſmallneſs and cloſeneſs of the room, in this uncommonly warm weather for the ſeaſon; but her intention was clearly to afford him an opportunity of entering upon the topic, which I moſt wiſh to avoid. The Marchioneſs is leſs kind to me upon this ſubject than upon any other; ſhe does not enter into my feelings. The French idea of an eſtabliſhment at all events, has more weight with her, than I think upon this occaſion it ought: it is, however, perhaps unreaſonable to expect to diveſt a Frenchwoman wholly of French ideas.

* Dreſſing gown.

In ſhort, the fact is, that, in ſpite of my entreaties and remonſtrances, ſhe gives him every opportunity of diſturbing his own peace, and diſtreſſing me. I truſt, however, this laſt will prove definitive; the particulars of our converſation you ſhall alſo have to morrow; ſuffice it for the preſent to ſay, that he is an honourable, generous, noble-minded man, whoſe eſteem I ſhould be flattered to ſecure; and though I have been very explicit, I hope I have entitled myſelf to be conſidered as—*not ungenerous*, at leaſt, in return.

But I haſten to give you an account of our evening, leſt, by deferring, any part of its ſpirit might evaporate, which would really be a loſs.

Lady Grantin came, attended by Count Caravallo, to be of the party to Mouſſeau. She ſaid Lord Grantin had perſuaded Madame de Lanfranc and her ſiſter to meet us.

When we arrived there, we were informed they were juſt gone into the gardens.

"We ſhall eaſily find them," ſaid Lady Grantin, "provided we can catch a peep here and there between the buildings."

" The buildings! in the *pleaſure ground*, does your ladyſhip mean?"

" Yes; don't you know that Mouſſeau is *le garde-meublè des jardins à l'Anglaiſe*?*"

If you ſaw Mouſſeau when you were here, Henry, the juſtneſs of the idea will ſtrike you.

We ſoon overtook the Viſcounteſs in her riding habit and half boots, who was ſo *extaſiée* at every ſtep, that ſhe did not move on very faſt: ſhe had ſeen it frequently before, but was now doing the honours of it to a young Engliſhman, whom Lord Grantin had introduced to her: of his Lordſhip and the Counteſs de Senlis there was no appearance; nor was any inquiry made after them.

" Ah! that divine windmill!" exclaimed the Viſcounteſs, juſt as we came in view of it.

" I ſhould have thought it might have been ſpared in the *garden*," ſaid Sir George, who had juſt run up the little eminence which

* In alluſion to the *Garde-meuble de la Couronne*, which is a ſtorehouſe for the ſummer furniture in winter, and the winter furniture in ſummer, belonging to the different royal palaces.

commands *Mont Martre*, "since the chief object in view here is covered with them."

"And the advantage of gaining a little room would have been considerable," I observed.

"But the Duke told me himself it would not be a *jardin à l'Anglaise* without one," said the Viscountess.

"Assuredly," cried Lady Grantin, "a mill is as necessary an object in a nobleman's pleasure-ground, as a piggery. I suppose you know, Viscountess, that pigs are held in such respect with us, as to have mausoleums erected to their memory?"

Madame de Lanfranc was charmed with the novelty of this idea. She is just laying out a *jardin à l'Anglaise* at Neuilly, which, with Lady Grantin's assistance, is likely to become an exquisite specimen of English taste.

"What distance is usually allowed between your buildings?" inquired Madame de Lanfranc.

"The size of your ground must determine that," Lady Grantin answered with quickness; lest any one else should have had the

charity to point out to her the folly of crowding into ſix acres, as it is here, what might, with ſome propriety, have been extended over ſix hundred.

"Is this *ſerpentine river* well imitated?" ſaid the Viſcounteſs, as we came to an Alpine bridge over a rill, confined between low brick walls, about ſix feet acroſs at the wideſt, but in many parts not above two; "does it reſemble that in your Hyde Park?"

"*Comme deux gouttes d'Eau,*" replied Lady Grantin *.

A general laugh enſued.

Madame de Sainval, whoſe bile had been a little ſtirred (as the French ſay) by the contemptuous ridicule with which this admired little ſpot was treated, could not reſiſt the opportunity of giving her ladyſhip a *coup de patte*.

"While Lady Grantin's candour," ſhe obſerved, "leads her to compenſate for reprobating our taſte, by condeſcending to *borrow*

* "As two drops of water." An anſwer actually given by a French wit, upon being aſked whether he thought it like *a river*.

our *bon mots*, we muſt be contented to conſider the account as balanced by the implied compliment."

"As my candour is not thrown away, I perceive, upon Madame de Sainval," retorted Lady Grantin, "I will carry it ſtill farther, and forgive her ſarcaſm, in favour of its wit."

"And in return, I will ſupply you with another *bon mot*, for ſome future opportunity. A friend of mine, being aſked whether he ſhould not like to have juſt ſuch a place as Mouſſeau? anſwered, 'Extremely, —for a plateau."

"Thank you, Marchioneſs, I will treaſure it up.—"

"As a proof, I hope," continued Madame de Sainval, "that thoſe who have *taſte* among us, can perceive the *exaggeration* of Mouſſeau as well as you."

"True; but you perhaps conſider the ridicule as bearing upon *Engliſh taſte*, whilſt we are cenſuring the miſapplication of it—as for inſtance," exclaimed Lady Grantin, jumping over the river, to illuſtrate her obſervation, by proving the perfect inutility of

the bridges, of various deſcriptions, that are laid acroſs it.

The lake, the iſland, the rock, the ruin, the pagoda, &c. *ad infinitum*, all, in their turn, afforded food for pleaſantry, till we reached the *jardin d'Hiver*; which is really a happy thought, well executed, and is exceeded only, it is ſaid, in ſize and taſte, by that of the Empreſs of Ruſſia.

Lady Grantin had taken my arm, and led me on before the reſt, to communicate ſome joke againſt Madame de Lanfranc, when ſhe was ſtopped ſhort, by the ſight of Lord Grantin in one of the receſſes, upon his knee before Madame de Senlis, kiſſing her hand, with ſome very rapturous exclamation.

I was confounded.

Lord Grantin ſtarted up, looking extremely ſilly.

The Counteſs ſaid playfully, and without ſeeming at all diſconcerted, "*Eh bien Milor! voyez donc à quoi vos mauvaiſes plaiſanteries nous expoſent* *!"

And Lady Grantin burſt into a violent fit of laughter.

* See to what your fooliſh jokes expoſe me.

"Upon my word," ſhe at length exclaimed, "I am quite obliged to you, Madame la Comteſſe, for reſtoring to my lord that ſpirit of gallantry, which I uſed to admire in him, and began to fear was wholly extinct."

Lord Grantin made an attempt to laugh, but finding it come rather awkwardly, he converted it into joy at meeting me.

The Counteſs, not quite ſatisfied with the appearance of things, began, "This betrays a ſort of ſecret to you—my ſiſter has thoughts of acting a play—and we were conſidering our different parts—"

"Thoſe you had hit upon were certainly very natural," interrupted Lady Grantin, ſtill laughing; "but make yourſelf eaſy, Counteſs, there is nothing *betrayed*, I aſſure you."

The Counteſs now looked a little ſilly alſo: Lady Grantin, affecting not to perceive it, called to Count Caravallo, to come and admire with what obliging attention to the accommodation of his friends, the Duke had fitted up theſe pretty little *boudoir* receſſes, which ſo happily blend *les intérêts du coeur* with general amuſement.

By this time the reſt of the party had joined us, and we returned to the *barrière*, where we had left our carriages.

When we came to Madame de Lanfranc's, her friends were aſſembled, and tea was ready; and ſuch a tea table!

It was large enough to admit of twenty people, placed in the middle of the room, covered with a tablecloth, and ſpread over with tea equipages (all conſiſting, by the by, of coffee cups), urns, and a profuſion of *gâteaux* of every ſort and ſize, *brioches*, *echaudez*—hot buttered rolls, fruit, ſweetmeats, &c. &c *.

We all ſat down, and ate and drank as if we had been famiſhed; no perſon in particular taking charge of the tea pots, but every one pouring out for themſelves, and repleniſhing the pot as it might happen; half filling their cups with ſugar and boiled cream, and adding ſome of this diſcoloured

* This deſcription of the tea-table will not appear ſo extraordinary, now that ſome faſhionable ladies have readopted, from the *French*, what they *believed* to have *imitated* from *us*; and that invitations for *a Thé*, exactly upon this plan, have actually been ſent out in the higher circles.

water, which was dignified with the name of tea, and made *un composé delicieux*, they ſaid.

This *báfre* went on for above an hour, and then we adjourned to *une lecture*. It was a tranſlation of Macbeth, done under Madame de Lanfranc's own eye; and ſhe propoſes to have it performed at the *théâtre François*. It is not poſſible to give you an idea of any thing more abſurdly literal.

The aſtoniſhment of the French part of the audience, at the incantations, &c. could only be exceeded by the diverſion of the Engliſh, at the perfect miſconception of every paſſage that we more particularly admire. For inſtance,

> And pity, like a naked new born babe,
> *Striding the blaſt*, or Heaven's cherubim horſed
> Upon the *ſightleſs* couriers of the air——
>
> *Et la pitié ſemblable à un enfant nouveau né*
> Enjambant le zéphir, *ou bien le céleſte chérubin*
> *Monté ſur les* aveugles *couriers de l'air*——

and a multiplicity of the ſame kind, that I do not at this moment recollect.

Upon being aſked by one of them, "*Au nom de dieu*," what all that *galimathias* meant? I ventured to obſerve upon the ex-

treme difficulty of tranſlating an author, whoſe meaning was frequently ſo obſcure as to have puzzled our moſt able critics.

" *Mais vous m'avouerez que c'eſt un grand défaut puiſqu'on écrit pour être lu et compris* *."

The tranſlator, whom I had believed to be out of the room when I hazarded my obſervation, now took it up warmly. " *Mais mon dieu pardonnez moi rien n'eſt ſi facile*†," the Engliſh only do not underſtand Shakſpeare, for want of a ſufficient knowledge of the French language, in which he abounds.

" Nothing is more obvious," exclaimed Lady Grantin. " A Frenchman alone can be competent to do juſtice to our Engliſh poet."

The tranſlator made a modeſt bow, and ſaid he ſhould have feared to appear preſumptuous in ſaying ſo.

" My dear Sir, your modeſty can only be equalled by your talents," ſhe replied.

He was " infinitely flattered"—and proceeded to the concluding act.

* But you will allow that this is a great fault, ſince people write to be read and underſtood.

† I beg your pardon, nothing is really more eaſy.

The ſuppreſſed ſurpriſe of the French, and the ſcarcely ſuppreſſed laughter of the Engliſh part of the company, formed a very characteriſtic contraſt.

They taſted of every thing, ſaid it was "excellent," and gave away their plates.

But when bottled porter and ale came to be ſerved round, inſtead of Burgundy and Champaigne, and that the Vicomteſſe declared the minced pies muſt not be taſted till ſhe had mixed *burnt brandy* with them, their *ſavoir-vivre* was quite overpowered, and they could not refrain from making faces and exclamations in abundance.

"*Diable! c'eſt une plaiſanterie! jamais on n'a pris un maudite drogue comme celle la, par plaiſir* *."

"*Et des petits pâtés à l'eau de vie!*" ſaid another; "*Allons donc Vicomteſſe, c'eſt ſe moquer du monde* †*!*"

"*C'eſt bon pour un corps de garde; mais jamais on n'a imaginé de ſervir un mets*

* The devil! it's a joke! never could any body take ſuch a curſed drug as this for pleaſure.

† And brandy pies! in truth, Viſcounteſs, you are making fools of us.

pareil en bonne compagnie * *!*" exclaimed a third.

The Viſcomteſſe appealed to Lady Grantin, who aſſerted, that the *drogue* and the *petits pâtés* were ſerved at the firſt tables in England.

Madame de Sainval's partiality, led her to hope our taſte might be reſcued from the imputation. "*Elle leur en donne joliment à garder, votre miladi! pas vrai mon coeur* *?" ſaid ſhe to me.

I was obliged to plead guilty to the porter and the minced pies; and my friend ſeemed at a loſs to reconcile this *goût barbare*, with her good opinion of the Engliſh.

They went on taſting and wondering, till ſome of them, from the unuſual mixture of liquors, became very ſick; others very noiſy; and when cards were called for after ſupper, very few were able to perform their parts, particularly as the Viſcomteſſe inſiſted that nothing but *whiſt* ſhould be played, ſince

* It may be very well at a ſoldier's meſs, but was never introduced into good company, I fancy.

† Lady Grantin can make them believe any thing; cannot ſhe, my dear?

the party were equally ignorant of backgammon, cribbage, and all-fours.

Could you have ſuppoſed it poſſible to adhere ſo literally to Engliſh materials, and deviate ſo widely from Engliſh manners?

And now my candles are juſt out, and my eyes half cloſed, and as my letter muſt go before they may be open again, I fold—ſeal—direct it, and then ſhall grope my way upon tiptoe into Flora's room, that ſhe may find it upon her table, and diſpatch it the firſt thing ſhe does in the morning—

And ſo good night, and farewel, my deareſt friend.

THE HONOURABLE CHARLES STANVILLE, TO SIR HENRY RIVERSDALE *.

It is impoſſible to deſcribe the anguiſh of my mind, upon being told that you had left London ere my letter reached it; though

* Mr. Stanville's narrative is here inſerted, on account of a hiatus of near two months in the journal of Miſs Riverſdale; ariſing, it is to be preſumed, from the loſs of the firſt pacquet ſhe addreſſed to Sir Henry Riverſdale in India.

what could your receipt of it have availed? ſince the precipitate ſailing of the ſhips made a moment's delay on your part impracticable; ſtill Louiſa's brother would then have known—what ſhe, perhaps, never muſt—how entirely my heart is devoted to his ſiſter—

Forgive me, Riverſdale, if I ſay, that well as I liked—much as I had ſeen to eſteem in you, during the ſhort period of our renewed acquaintance, it is the ſtrong tie of fraternity to Louiſa, that has ſtamped you with a pre-eminence ſo marked, above all thoſe I have ſo much longer loved and eſteemed, as to entitle you to the excluſive confidence, of miſery long pent up, which has now increaſed almoſt to madneſs, by the conflict that tortures my breaſt.

I am told that my letter was carefully forwarded; ſtill it may never reach you. I would inſtantly proceed to Portſmouth upon landing, for the chance of ſtill catching you, were not the buſineſs, which I have made the plea of my return, of ſuch importance, as to oblige me not only immediately to ſee the miniſter, but await his farther pleaſure before I can ſtir.

In the precarious expectation, therefore, of this reaching in any poſſible time to obtain an anſwer, I devote the hours, with which the adverſe wind and tide ſupply me, to arranging and connecting the detached particulars, which I had begun to commit to paper from the firſt moment that the thought of appealing to you occurred; as I could not have recollected with equal detail, in one, or in a dozen converſations, the facts which are requiſite to enable you to form a fair and impartial judgment.

And with theſe, Jones ſhall proceed to Portſmouth the inſtant I land.

You certainly recollect the agreeable young Frenchman, with whom I had travelled to Naples, when I met you there: his ſiſter was in the convent of the Dames Anglaiſes at Paris. Curioſity to ſee the inſide of a nunnery, had induced me to propoſe accompanying him on one of his viſits to her, to which he readily agreed.

Together with Mademoiſelle Durfort, there appeared at the grille a lovely young girl of about ſixteen, and an elderly woman, who inſtantly entered into converſation with me; and amongſt a number of other particulars,

which ſhe ſeemed eager to communicate, informed me that the *penſionnaire* I ſaw was upon the point of entering her noviciate, and had the moſt decided vocation ſhe had ever ſeen. At this account I caſt a look upon this devoted victim, and caught a glance from her fine languiſhing blue eyes, which inſtantly ſuggeſted to me a doubt of the nature of her enthuſiaſtic fervour; and my very ſoul was grieved, to think that her doom muſt be irretrievably ſealed, ere ſhe would become ſenſible of her errour. A few ſentences of civility paſſed between us, accompanied on my part with a degree of compaſſionate ſolicitude I could not ſuppreſs; on hers, with the moſt intereſting ſimplicity. We took our leave; and Agathe caſt a parting look upon me, which fully confirmed the idea I had formed.

"That beautiful girl is going to be ſacrificed," ſaid I; "ſhe enters her noviciate next month."—"It would be a meritorious work to reſcue her," replied d'Hermonville, ſmiling—"I am ſo ſeriouſly of that opinion, Chevalier, that I would have you go inſtantly to her parents, if you be acquainted with them, and repreſent the cruelty of ſuffering her to

proceed."—"And what peculiar cruelty ſhall I tell them there is in her ſituation, my dear Don Quixote? (laughing) for I apprehend it to be little more than what occurs daily, in every convent in France. I have no knowledge whatever of this little girl's connexions; but I will enter into your ſpirit of chivalry with all my ſoul, and introduce myſelf to her parents, if you will only point out to me what to ſay."——"Say! by Heaven, her looks tell clearly enough what is to be ſaid."—"Very well; I am to tell them that her eyes turned upon you with an expreſſion, which convinced you, ſhe miſtakes the nature of the love, with which ſhe profeſſes herſelf to be inſpired." "You will then, I truſt, at the ſame time, come handſomely forward, and propoſe the alternative?"—"My dear d'Hermonville, you joke, and are too much habituated to hear of theſe kind of ſacrifices, to feel the compaſſion with which they inſpire me .... So far, however, you are right: unleſs ſomething more were known, it is not eaſy to judge what plea might avail with the parents.—"I can diſcover nothing like one: my ſiſter was as full of her vocation as ſoeur Benedicte."—"Suppoſe we were to ſee your

ſiſter again, and inquire more particularly into the ſubject?"—"Nothing ſo eaſy. My mother fetches her home to ſee her intended huſband on Thurſday, and I will introduce you, and aſk any queſtions you ſhall ſuggeſt."

D'Hermonville kept his word; and from his ſiſter we learnt, that the fervour of Agathe had been the admiration and pride of the whole community for many months paſt. "She is an orphan of Iriſh extraction," ſaid Mademoiſelle Durfort, "was placed there by a diſtant relation, who is her guardian; a worthy man, but not in circumſtances to eſtabliſh her in the world: of courſe he wiſhed that ſhe might be induced to take the veil; and conſequently the good nuns have neglected no means that could bias her ſenſibility, and enthuſiaſtic diſpoſition, in favour of a religious life; and ſhe is more impatient for the moment of entering upon her noviciate, than I am for that of quitting the convent. But within theſe few days we are ſenſible of a change in her, for which we are at a loſs to account: ſhe has been frequently found in tears; and was particularly

urgent to accompany me home to-day, but could not obtain permiſſion."

D'Hermonville requeſted his ſiſter to uſe her intereſt with the ſuperieure, the next time ſhe came home, to bring Agathe with her, to which ſhe agreed.

Mademoiſelle Durfort ſucceeded in her application, and obtained liberty for Agathe to continue with her the three days that ſhe was to ſtay with her mother.

I had now free admiſſion at the Ducheſs's; and d'Hermonville took me home to dinner on the day that the young ladies were expected. The altered looks of Agathe ſtruck me forcibly; and the artleſs, but too obvious expreſſion with which her eyes were rivetted upon me, from the moment I took my place oppoſite to her at table, attracted general obſervation. The brilliant proſpects of Mademoiſelle Durfort were occaſionally alluded to, and Agathe with difficulty ſuppreſſed a tear.

It was not in nature, Riverſdale . . . . not in *my* nature, at leaſt, to be inſenſible to the diſtreſs of the ſweet unfortunate girl: yet truſt me, my thoughts were ſolely bent upon

discovering a mode to rescue a heart, so alarmingly susceptible, from irretrievable misery. She was formed of far other materials than what were suited to a cloister; but I call Heaven to witness, that no selfish idea prompted the anxiety to save her from those cruel shackles, that preclude the indulgence of every finer feeling, and set all the "tender charities" of life at nought: the interest I at that moment felt, would have been the same, had I been morally certain of never beholding her more.

As we reentered the saloon, I overheard the Duchess whisper her daughter; "*A quoi pensois tu donc d'amener cette pauvre petite? tu vas detruire sa vocation, elle raffole de ce jeune Anglois.**"

This checked my intention of approaching Agathe, which, at any rate, however, could have been of little avail, as the strictness with which a single woman is ever kept at the elbow of some aged female, prevented any possibility of entering into conversation.

Mademoiselle Durfort, however, beckoned

* What could you be thinking of to bring that poor thing hither? Her vocation will be entirely destroyed; the young Englishman turns her head.

me to the corner, where ſhe and Agathe, with their duennas, were looking over ſome toys. I then entered upon ſome general topics, and inquired after my old acquaintance, Madame de Remines, to whom I found ſhe was related.

She faultered, and changed colour, as ſhe ſpoke to me. I obſerved ſeveral eyes turned upon us, and thought it beſt to take myſelf away; I therefore propoſed to d'Hermonville a turn upon the boulevards, before we went to the play.

I almoſt feel it neceſſary to apologiſe, even to you, Riverſdale, for the apparent vanity of dwelling upon a partiality ſo inſtantaneouſly conceived, and ſo ſtrongly marked, without the ſlighteſt encouragement on my ſide; but I compel myſelf to be equally ſincere and minute, that you may fairly be enabled to blame or acquit me in the ſequel; and in fact there is little food for vanity, where the election may ſo decidedly be aſcribed to prediſpoſition.

The inſtant we were ſeated in the carriage, d'Hermonville ſaid, "That lovely little innocent is at your diſpoſal, my friend; her partiality is obvious; and if you have any

propoſals to make to her guardian, there can be no difficulty in liberating her."—"You place me in a very awkward ſituation, Chevalier; but I am ſufficiently known to you to expreſs myſelf with the utmoſt frankneſs: my preſent circumſtances preclude all thoughts of matrimony, and excuſe me if I add, that our Engliſh ideas of conjugal felicity reach ſo far beyond mere beauty and ſenſibility, that at all events my taking part as a principal in this affair, is quite out of the queſtion."—"Senſibility is certainly better diſpenſed with in a wife," he replied; "but my ſiſter ſays, her ſweetneſs of temper equals her beauty."—"But ſenſe, conformity of mind and diſpoſition, are full as requiſite as either. Matrimony muſt be Paradiſe or Purgatory; there is no medium; and therefore long acquaintance, and mature conſideration, are requiſite"—"*Ah mon dieu! que ces têtes Anglaiſes ſont exaltées*!*" (interrupting me). "Would not one imagine that England was a perfect matrimonial Elyſium? and yet look into your newſpapers, and ſee what all your love matches come to. No

* Heavens! how romantic thoſe Engliſh heads are!

such eclat and scandal follow our more rational mode of proceeding. We marry because every man who has the means to provide for a family is bound to perpetuate his name; and as the husband and wife are not acquainted before-hand, it often happens that they discover unlooked for agreeableness in each other; and then it has all the merit of a surprise, and creates *le meilleur ménage du monde*, of which I can give you many proofs among my own acquaintance: here, too, you would have the great advantage of being sure of your wife's love and gratitude before-hand."—"But suppose I cannot return her affection, Chevalier, how then?"—"Why novelty and good-nature must constitute your happiness for awhile; and if she find you do not become passionately fond of her, her passion will subside, and then she will be no longer *exigeante*, and you will tacitly agree to be no constraint upon each other. *Monsieur ira de son côté; Madame de sien**: You will meet at dinner with perfect politeness and good breeding; appearances will be saved; scandal avoided; each will be happy

* Each go their own way.

in their own way, and the world will not interfere in any shape: what can a reasonable man wish for more?"

As I did not subscribe to this plan of happiness, I seriously entreated him to turn his thoughts to some more practicable mode of rescuing Agathe. Where was the use (he said) of rescuing her from the fetters of religion, merely to sacrifice her as a victim to love? Would I pretend to deny that I had withdrawn her heart from Heaven?—I contended that her fervour had been entirely mistaken: an overflowing sensibility, wanting an object, was easily turned into religious enthusiasm; and had they confined her wholly to the society of her companions, her misery had been irrevocably fixed ere she had discovered her errour: but the first man that has met her eyes has destroyed the delusion; do not, however, imagine him to be the only one likely to prove her susceptibility: feelings so easily awakened will naturally transfer their fulness to some more sympathetic breast.

D'Hermonville then called upon me to suggest some plan. I proposed that his sister should exert her influence with Agathe, to

declare her reluctance to take the veil; and should that not prove sufficient, it would at least afford grounds for the Duchess's interference with the guardian.

To this d'Hermonville agreed, and Mademoiselle Durfort readily undertook her part; but Agathe only answered her with tears, and made no avowal of any change in her wishes.

D'Hermonville applied to his mother, and obtained her promise of arguing with the old Count.

The Count was much surprised, and not very ready to credit the intelligence. Such proofs of his ward's decided vocation had been imparted to him, that he had declined a very advantageous proposal of marriage for her, made by an old friend of his own, who had seen her once at the grille, and been charmed with her beauty: but her heavenly dedication appeared so unquestionable, that the Count would have considered it as a species of sacrilege to interfere.

The Duchess imparted her reasons for forming a different judgment of the dispositions of Agathe, probably without much scruple or delicacy; for the Count became

extremely irritated, at the ſuppoſition that the mere ſight of an Engliſh heretic ſhould have ſet aſide a call ſo unequivocal: nothing ſhort of ſupernatural malignant interference, could account for it, he ſaid. He would go inſtantly to the convent, and ſee the ſuperieure. The Ducheſs propoſed his firſt ſeeing Agathe, who was then at her houſe; and he attended her home.

Agathe received her guardian, and hung about him with more than ordinary marks of affection: He interrogated her upon the intereſting point, with encouraging kindneſs; and an idea darting into her mind, that he might intend taking her home to his old ſiſter, to replace his daughter, who was at the eve of marriage, ſhe without heſitation acknowledged, that, as the moment approached, ſhe began to feel a terrour of the eternal confinement, and to fear that her vocation was more doubtful than ſhe had imagined.

Her guardian undertook to plead her cauſe, both with the ſuperieure and Madame de Remines, in his way back from Verſailles; and Agathe remained for a few hours as happy as newly awakened hope can make an

ardent youthful mind. She ſaw, in the proſpect of inhabiting the houſe of her guardian, an opening to every other that her heart ſecretly ſuggeſted; and her agitation became ſo extreme, towards the hour of his expected return, that upon his name being announced ſhe had ſcarce power to utter her inquiring "*Eh bien?*" as ſhe darted into the antiroom, and threw herſelf into his arms. "All is ſettled to our wiſh," ſaid he, embracing her. She appeared ſuffocating with joy, till a burſt of tears brought her relief.

The Count congratulated himſelf upon having reſcued the innocent victim, and was pouring out his acknowledgments to the Ducheſs for her friendly interference, when I went in. The joy of Agathe was at that moment too powerful for conſideration, and claſping her hands in an extaſy, ſhe exclaimed, "O, Sir, congratulate me! I am free; I return no more to my convent."

From the bottom of my heart I did congratulate her; and was proceeding, with an emotion which muſt have been pictured in my countenance, to give the Ducheſs her due ſhare of praiſe for the active part ſhe had taken, when I was ſtopped by an exclama-

tion from the Count, whom I had not before perceived, and of whoſe authority I became inſtantly aware, as he ſaid, ſternly, "Joy turns your head, Agathe! What concern can a ſtranger have in your deſtination? and what right have you to conclude that the remiſſion of your noviciate implies your not returning any more to your convent?"—Abaſhed at his rebuke, ſhe attempted to excuſe herſelf, and ended by ſaying, "But indeed you are miſtaken in believing that gentleman to be a ſtranger to me; on the contrary, it is he who . . . he who . . ." She heſitated, bluſhed, and hung about him, to conceal her embarraſſment. "*He who*, what?" ſaid he angrily.

Perceiving her to be confounded, I endeavoured to give a turn to the ſenſe of her words, and ſaid, "*He who*, actuated perhaps by the prejudice of his country againſt a life of perfect ſecluſion, took the liberty of ſuggeſting doubts of Mademoiſelle de Miraude's chance for happineſs, which might contribute to open her eyes to the danger of too haſtily foregoing what can never be recalled."

"It appears to me, Sir," he replied, "that, putting national prejudice out of the queſtion, it is difficult for the inhabitants of one

country to judge of what may conſtitute the felicity of thoſe of another; where the habits, modes of life, and civil government, are totally different. In England, you give your young women a degree of liberty which would ill qualify them for a ſubſequent life of reſtraint. We train up ours in ſecluſion, which, if it ſhould afterward become their deſtination, habituates them to confine their ideas to the ſpot they have learnt to love and revere, and to conſider as a ſhelter from the turmoil and viciſſitudes of the world." [How plauſibly does reaſon ever conform to cuſtom, Riverſdale!] "It remains to be ſeen, Sir," he added, with ſome aſperity, "whether Agathe will have much to thank you for, in the change, of which you avow yourſelf the authour, in her way of thinking." And without giving time for the reply which was riſing to my lips, he turned with quickneſs to his ward, ſaying, "So far from any idea of detaining you from your convent, I have requeſted of the Abbeſſe that you may not again come out of it, until I ſend for you home to ſign the articles of marriage with the Vicomte de la Fare, who is an old friend of mine, and has done you the honour to ſelect you for his

second wife. His fortune and family are so unexceptionable, that nothing but my unwillingness to interfere with the will of Heaven prevented my closing with his generous propofals, when he made them some time ago."

It is impossible to describe the too expressive transitions of Agathe's countenance. Wholly unaccustomed, however, to resistance, she made no reply; but from deep scarlet turned deadly pale—her eyes lost their lustre—closed—and her head sank upon the shoulder of Angelique, who with looks of kind sympathy, and the assistance of her mother, led her into the bed room, where the women of the Duchess were summoned; and with more than usual consideration for the sufferer, the bedchamber door was shut, to the exclusion of the men.

In a few minutes the Duchess returned, saying it was only *des vapeurs* *, to which she understood from her daughter Agathe was subject; and a little quiet would recover her.

The Count took his leave, hoping she

* Hysterics.

would be well, and ready to return to the convent, when he ſhould call for her in the morning; and requeſted ſhe might not again be fetched from it.

I was grieved to find that I had only ſucceeded in changing the nature of the ſacrifice to which Agathe was doomed; however ſure I thought myſelf that affections ſo eaſily engaged would be as eaſily transferred, it was not likely to be a man of nearly the Count's own age that would operate the change. I applied to d'Hermonville, to obtain the interference of his mother once more: but he did not perceive the ſmalleſt occaſion for it: ſince I did not mean to propoſe myſelf, what could be more deſirable for her than the brilliant eſtabliſhment offered by a man who could not expect to engage her affections, and might rather deem it a piece of good fortune that her heart was fixed upon one who was too inſenſible to make her a return, and at all events too ſcrupulous to take advantage of her predilection. My arguments only excited his mirth: "*d'ou diable venez vous donc mon pauvre Stanville avec tous ces radotages de vieux romans! cette enfant a de la grace, elle fera bien les honneurs de*

*ſa maiſon; elle eſt douce, elle ſera reconnoiſſante des dons dont il la comblera; elle lui ſera un héritier; ou eſt donc le grand malheur de tout cela? et lorſqu'avec le tems elle ſe conſolera de votre inſenſibilité, avec quelqu' ami plus tendre; il y'a, à parier qu'elle reſpectera toujours les bienſeances et qu'il prendra ſon parti tout comme un autre *."*

It was impoſſible to bring him to ſee it in a more ſerious light; and I determined to apply myſelf to the Ducheſs.

Upon ſending in my name, I was inſtantly admitted to her toilette; and upon requeſting a private audience, ſhe diſmiſſed her viſitors and women: but when I came to ſtate the purport of my viſit, ſhe laughed at me as immoderately as her ſon had done; and I

* Where the devil have you imbibed all this rhodomontade nonſenſe, my poor Stanville? The girl has graceful manners, and will do the honours of his houſe well. She is mild, and will be grateful for the gifts he will beſtow upon her. She will bring him an heir; and where's the great miſchief of all that? and when ſhe conſoles herſelf in time for your inſenſibility with ſome more ſympathiſing friend, the odds are that ſhe will always ſave appearances, and he will make up his mind as other huſbands do.

gave up all hope of rendering any eſſential ſervice to Agathe.

A fortnight elapſed, during which I was employed in buſineſs of importance by the Ambaſſador, and had little leiſure to think either of myſelf or Agathe.

D'Hermonville came one morning abruptly into my room, ſaying he was ſent by his ſiſter, to deſire I would go once more with him to the Dames Anglaiſes, to endeavour to *mettre Agathe à la raiſon* *, who obſtinately reſiſts the will of her guardian, and now declares, that, rather than marry the Viſcomte, ſhe will reſume her intention of taking the veil; and ſhe had made a point with Angelique of communicating this determination to me.

Of courſe I inſtantly obeyed the ſummons. Mademoiſelle Durfort appeared at the grille, with a companion I had not before ſeen. She winked to her brother to keep her companion in converſation, and he ſoon drew her away to a diſtance; when ſhe informed me that I had been ſummoned at the deſire of Agathe, in the hope of being able

* Perſuade Agathe to hear reaſon.

to ſee me at the grille herſelf; but that her late refractorineſs cauſed her to be watched with more than common vigilance, and not having been ſuffered to accompany Angelique the day before, when only her brother had been there, ſhe had written. " Upon your anſwer, ſhe ſays, hangs her fate (added Mademoiſelle Durfort, as ſhe put the letter into my hand); you cannot again come yourſelf, but my brother will convey it to me."

This was Agathe's letter.

" On me met au deſeſpoir Monſieur, et c'eſt ce qui me fait avoir recours à vous, qui êtes du païs dont je tire mon origine. On m'aſſure que vous vous interreſſez à mon ſort, on m'aſſure auſſi qu'il y a des Anglais qui ne ſont pas hérétiques, et à coup sûr vous êtes du nombre, cair jamais hérétique n'a eu l'air ſi doux et ſi obligeant. Eh bien Monſieur il ne tiendroit qu'à vous de m'arracher à tout ce qui me menace; ſi vous avez une mère—une ſoeur—une tante ſeulement qui voulut me donner une azile, car je n'ai ni parens, ni amis, ſi ce n'eſt Madame de Remines, qui ne m'écouteroit ſeulement pas; mon tuteur qui me met au deſeſpoir; epuis encore une vieille tante qui demeure au

fin fond de la province, et qui peut-être me donneroit tort auſſi d'avoir une autre volonté que celle de mon oncle: et de fait je m'apperçois qui c'eſt bien mal à moi d'avoir cette volonté la, car depuis qu'elle m'eſt venue je n'ai plus un moment de repos; et cependant je vous aſſure Monſieur qu'il n'y à pas de ma faute; je dis des Ave Maria tant et plus pour que la ſainte vierge me rende docile, mais elle ne m'écoute point, et il n'y a pas moyen, je ne puis plus être ni à dieu, ni à Monſieur le Vicomte: je pleure ſans ceſſe, et ſi je n'étudiois un peu d'Anglais avec ma bonne amie Angelique, pour me diſtraire, je crois en vérité que je mourrois de douleur. Voyez Monſieur ſi vous avez quelque ame charitable qui put me recueillir et s'intereſſer à ma peine. Je vous aſſure que vous n'obligeriez pas une ingrate *."

* They drive me to deſpair, Sir, and this obliges me to have recourſe to you, who belong to the country from which my family originates. I am told that you intereſt yourſelf in my fate: I am told, likewiſe, that all Engliſhmen are not heretics; and you are aſſuredly an exception, for no heretic ever looked ſo mild and ſo obliging. Well, Sir, it reſts with you to ſnatch me from the threatened danger, if you have a mother, a

What heart of ſtone could have reſiſted the artleſs eloquence of her grief! what villain could have been ſo baſe as to ſeek to turn it to his own advantage!

I inſtantly determined to comply with her wiſh, in finding ſome reſpectable protection for her; and went in queſt of an amiable Engliſh family, particularly connected with ours, who were at the eve of their departure

ſiſter, or even an aunt, that would afford me ſhelter, for I have neither relation nor friend, except Madame de Remines, who would not liſten to me; my guardian, who drives me to diſtraction; and an old aunt, in a remote part of the country, who would perhaps only blame me for thinking differently from my uncle; and, in fact, I perceive that it is very wrong in me to think differently, for ever ſince theſe thoughts have come into my head, I have not had a moment's peace; and yet I do aſſure you, Sir, it is not my fault; I ſay ave marias without end, that the holy Virgin may grant me to be ſubmiſſive; but ſhe does not hear me, and I know not what to do, I can no longer devote myſelf either to God or the Viſcount. I weep without ceaſing, and if it were not for ſtudying a little Engliſh with my good friend Angelique, I really believe I ſhould break my heart. Do, Sir, conſider whether you cannot find ſome charitable ſoul to take compaſſion on me, and reſcue me; I aſſure you, you would not find me ungrateful.

for England; certain that the extreme benevolence and kind heartedneſs of Lady Williams, would induce her to take Agathe under her protection, and convey her ſafely to my ſiſter.

I found the eldeſt daughter only at home, to whom I related every thing, but my own ſhare, in the change of Agathe. She entered into it with the generous warmth of youth, which foreſees no difficulties, and anſwered for her mother.

D'Hermonville conveyed my anſwer to Agathe, aſſuring her of the moſt unexceptionable aſylum, if ſhe could fall upon any means of eſcape.

I was ſoon made ſenſible of my raſhneſs, by a meſſage from Lady Williams, who deſired to ſee me, and that no previous ſtep might be taken in the buſineſs which Miſs Williams had mentioned to her.

My note to Agathe was irrecoverable; and I made no attempt to counteract it by a ſecond, in the full perſuaſion that I ſhould argue Lady Williams out of the conſiderations of prudence, which I foreſaw were to be oppoſed to me.

This undertaking, however, exceeded my

abilities. The timidity of Lady Williams was at leaſt equal to her goodneſs: her mind was ſtrongly impreſſed with the danger and ſerious conſequences attending ſuch an *enlevement*; and ſhe poſitively refuſed to take any ſhare in it.

My feelings were too much alive for poor Agathe, to allow to the objections of Lady Williams their due weight, and I left her, curſing the cold blooded prudence that thus thwarted my plan; but ſtrongly ſenſible that no time was to be loſt in counteracting the purport of my note, I followed d'Hermonville to Verſailles, where he was upon duty; and he undertook to deliver another note to his ſiſter, imparting my failure, requeſting the direction to the aunt of Agathe, and that no ſtep might be taken until ſhe ſhould hear from me again.

Two days paſſed, during which I every inſtant expected to receive the direction, which would enable me to have recourſe to the old Marchioneſs; and upon the ſlighteſt encouragement from her, I meant to ſecure ſome decent elderly woman as a travelling companion for Agathe, and eſcort her myſelf. I had been too much hampered with

buſineſs to admit of my making inquiry into the cauſe of delay, but on the third day I loſt patience, and returned to Verſailles, where I found d'Hermonville had been detained, to mount guard for a friend who was taken ſuddenly ill; on which account he had not been able to go to the convent himſelf, but he had contrived to forward the note in a box of millinery, which his mother was ſending to Angelique, preparatory to her marriage.

I ſhuddered at the riſk to which this hazardous expedient might expoſe Agathe, and entreated him to make it his firſt buſineſs, at his return to Paris, to ſee his ſiſter.

Another day paſſed in conſiderable uneaſineſs without my hearing from him, or daring to take any ſtep. On the following morning, at an early hour, I received a meſſage from d'Hermonville, deſiring me to be at home in about a quarter of an hour, and alone.

In leſs than the time mentioned he appeared, holding by the hand a very young lad, whom he preſented to me as his nephew, and requeſted I would be kind to him. As he ſaid this he bolted the door, and then

burſting into a loud laugh, exclaimed, "Well, what think you of this maſquerade? here's a heroine for you!"

Picture to yourſelf my aſtoniſhment and perplexity, when I recogniſed Agathe.

Her bluſhes and confuſion might indeed have diſcovered her to me inſtantly, but that my mind was full of the buſineſs upon which I expected him, and to which I conſidered his companion as an interruption, and had not attended to him at all.

I began to apologiſe for being the unlucky inſtrument of involving her in difficulties; but ſhe interrupted me, with deepening bluſhes, "You have not involved me, Sir; if there be any fault, my own precipitance only is to blame; but pray take me directly to the good lady who will receive me, and entreat her to conceal me carefully till we ſet out."

Without ſtopping to make either anſwer or inquiry, I locked them both into my room, and flew to the hôtel de Richelieu, certain that if Lady Williams were not ſet out, ſhe would, now the poor girl had plunged into the difficulty, grant immediate

protection, at leaſt till we could determine what to do.

Lady Williams had left Paris the day before. I returned home, perplexed beyond meaſure. The diſappointment of Agathe is not to be expreſſed; ſhe wrung her hands in ſpeechleſs agony. Finding her incapable of giving me an anſwer, I inquired of d'Hermonville what could have led to this raſh ſtep, contrary to my entreaty, and before I had ſecured an aſylum for her? "She had not received my ſecond note," he ſaid; "his ſiſter, being unfortunately indiſpoſed when the box arrived, had neither examined it herſelf, nor ſuffered any one elſe to do ſo, by which means the note had not found its way." "This was a *contre-temps* * which could not poſſibly be foreſeen," he added, "and was doubly diſtreſſing, as there was no reſource now but for Agathe to remain with me, in her preſent diſguiſe, until I could take her to England, and place her under the protection of Lady Williams myſelf."

The impropriety, as well as danger of this,

* Diſappointment.

was obvious. After what had paſſed, the very firſt ſuſpicion would reſt upon me, who could neither protect her myſelf from the power that would claim her, nor expect the Ambaſſadour to ſupport me in a matter that muſt involve ſuch very ſerious conſequences. I told him that I hoped his ſiſter, who had incurred a ſhare of reſponſibility by abetting this ſtep, would be able, for her own ſake, to induce the Ducheſs to interfere with the Count and the Abbeſs, and take Agathe under her protection in the meanwhile.

His ſiſter had no ſhare in it whatever, and he was very ſure his mother would be inexorable in a thing of this nature.

My aſtoniſhment was increaſed, as you may ſuppoſe. "And how, for Heaven's ſake, was the eſcape accompliſhed? and how could you, who knew the contents of my laſt note, ſuffer her to encounter this dreadful perplexity?" I demanded with a degree of warmth and diſpleaſure, which I found it difficult to repreſs.

Agathe now cried out with vehemence, "O, he had no ſhare in it; it was all my own doing—my own folly, and all from de-

pendence upon you, who I was ſo ſure would not abandon me; and now you think of nothing but how to throw me back into their power; but I ſhall firſt die of grief" — and ſhe became perfectly frantic.—I had fortunately taken the precaution to clear the antichamber of ſervants, or we muſt have been betrayed by her ungovernable diſtreſs.

I uſed every perſuaſion to ſoothe her, and bring her to a ſtate of ſufficient compoſure, to impart the mode in which ſhe had effected her eſcape, that I might form ſome judgment of the impending danger, and what remained to be done. The Chevalier had walked ſulkily to the window, without vouchſafing an anſwer to my laſt queſtion, and left me to appeaſe her as I might.

After a conſiderable time ſhe became more calm, and acquired command over herſelf to inform me, that Angelique having been confined to her bed from ſevere indiſpoſition, the Ducheſs frequently ſent one of her own women to watch by her, at the hours ſhe could not herſelf be with her. . . . But you ſhall have the narrative in her own ſimple words, as nearly as I can recollect them.

will not rob her of any ſhare of the intereſt ſhe is entitled to excite, though it ſhould turn the balance againſt myſelf in your judgment.

"Mademoiſelle Victoire ſometimes brought her niece Manon with her to diſſipate my chagrin, for ſhe could not bear to ſee me ſo *triſte*. Yeſterday Angelique had deſired the aſſiſtance of Manon, to finiſh a piece of embroidery, who left her long cloke and calèche upon my bed. As I was following her into Angelique's cell, with my head running upon contrivances for my eſcape, I ſaw the tourière at the door, talking with two or three people. The door was open, and my good angel inſpired me that the converſation of ſoeur Françoiſe would not be at an end before I could get back and ſlip on the calèche and cloke, and that I might paſs unobſerved, as her face was turned away from the paſſage I was to go along; and when once I was paſſed ſhe would only ſee my back, and take me for Manon. I glided by like the wind, determined to run with all my might the inſtant I was out of ſight, quite ſure my heart would guide me ſtraight to you; but I never reflected that the outer gate might be ſhut. Very luckily, however,

the berline of the Ducheſs, which had brought Mademoiſelle Victoire, was in waiting in the court-yard, and the coachman, who was lounging againſt the wall, miſtaking me for Manon, opened the coach door, and I jumped in without heſitation, not daring to ſpeak, leſt I might betray myſelf, and truſting to my good angel again to ſuggeſt to me *en chemin* how to obviate his taking me to the hôtel Durfort: however, it pleaſed Providence to befriend me, for all at once we ſtopped, and I found it was at Madame Emon the embroidereſs's, where Manon is apprentice, and where he had taken her up. Having ſet me down, he drove away again for Mademoiſelle Victoire, and I ruſhed into the houſe, very much embarraſſed how to make Madame Emon my friend, and praying to the holy Virgin in my heart to forgive all the falſities I might be obliged to utter; and ſhe took pity on me this time, and ſent Madame Emon into the paſſage with a parcel in her hand, who, without giving me time to ſpeak, ſcolded me for ſtaying away ſo long, when I knew the *lévite* was to be carried home, and giving me the parcel, bid me go with it directly.

"I took the parcel, and running out of the door, turned down the firſt ſtreet I came to, and then aſked which was the way to the Hôtel d'Angleterre? for I was certain every body muſt know; but would you believe it? nobody did; then indeed I grew very much frightened, and I thought there was nothing left for me but to go back to Madame Emon, and throw myſelf upon her pity; but I did not know the name of her ſtreet either, and had gone down ſo many, whilſt I was making my inquiries, that I could no longer find my way back; ſo I ſtood ſtill, and cried.—A hackney coachman ſaw me, and aſked what was the matter? I told him I could not find my way to the hôtel d'Angleterre. 'I don't know it either,' ſaid he, 'but I think it muſt be a good way from the Fauxbourg St. Antoine, and your pretty little feet will never carry you to it; ſo come *ma pauvre enfant*, don't fret, get into my coach, and we'll find it, I warrant you.' So I thanked him a thouſand times, and got into his coach. He drove on a good while, and at length we got in amongſt a great number of carriages; and he ſaid, 'This is the Théâtre Français, and ſome charitable ſoul will give us information,

I dare say;' and he went to inquire. Meanwhile two officers passed by, one of whom I recognised to be the brother of my dear Angelique, and throwing myself half out of the coach door with joy, I eagerly screamed after him. Upon hearing his name he stopped, and they both came back laughing; but nothing could exceed his astonishment, to find it was me. I was beginning to tell him my distress, when he put his finger to his lip to make me silent, and whispered something to his companion, who immediately left us. The Chevalier got into the coach, with expressions of surprise at my extraordinary appearance there. My explanation was interrupted by the return of the coachman, who was beginning to inform me that we had to go as far as the Barrière du Roule, when the Chevalier interrupted him, with a peremptory order to drive to the Marais. I remonstrated against going any where but to you; but he said, this was a business of a nature far too serious to run the hazard of being so easily traced; we must endeavour to *dérouter* inquiry, as well as to gain time for a little consideration how to proceed. It was the wife of his foster brother to whom he took

me in the Marais. He ſaid, he knew he could truſt to their affection and diſcretion. He imparted only ſo much of my ſituation as was neceſſary to impreſs her and her huſband with the urgency of concealment. It was ſettled that the huſband ſhould provide me with this diſguiſe, and the Chevalier, leaving me to their care, appointed to call again for me this morning. I was not very happy to find myſelf under protection ſo different from that to which I had intended to fly; however, when the Chevalier came this morning to conduct me to you, I was comforted, and thought all was well; but, inſtead of that, you only want to get rid of me, and throw me back into every difficulty from which I had fled: you did not look as if you could have been ſo hardhearted."

Her tears now flowed afreſh; and there was that confiding ſimplicity in her look and tone, which appealed forcibly to every honeſt feeling in my mind. "I will ſave you as far as my power goes, ſweet girl!" I exclaimed; "but the mode to effect it will require mature deliberation. Why would you not comply with the requeſt in my laſt note, and ſtay till I had provided a place of

safety for you?" "What note?" said Agathe, with surprise; "I never received but one." "And did not d'Hermonville tell you of my second request?" "No, certainly," said d'Hermonville; "where was the use of increasing her uneasiness, when I found it was too late to act upon it?" I was struck with this considerate kindness, and with my own injustice to him, and holding out my hand, cried, "Forgive my warmth, dear Chevalier! and assist me to consider in what place of safety we can best deposit Mademoiselle de Mirande, until I can write and interest her aunt in her favour."

He gave me his hand, smiling; but a very unforeseen difficulty now arose, which was, that Agathe could give no direction to her aunt whatever. Of all that she knew I was already in possession, which was, that the old Marchioness de Vieuxchamp inhabited the *fin fond* of some province or other; but which of the twenty-eight Agathe had never thought of inquiring. Her letters went once a year through the hands of her guardian, and she had concerned herself no farther.

In this increased dilemma, the importance

of perfect concealment became of ſtill greater moment; and I recollected an old Iriſh Roman catholic ſervant of my father's, who had married and ſettled in a remote part of the Fauxbourg St. Germain, which we agreed upon being the moſt probable place of ſafety for the preſent. Very reluctantly indeed did Agathe comply with this propoſal. She was ſo perfectly ſatisfied of the impoſſibility of her being diſcovered in the diſguiſe ſhe wore, and ſo certain that her beſt ſecurity was my immediate preſence, and ſo determined to accompany me to England, in preference to placing any dependance upon her aunt, that there was no convincing her of the neceſſity for taking this ſtep, until d'Hermonville aſſerted that my ſafety would be endangered by her perſiſting, and then ſhe inſtantly gave way.

I went by myſelf to old Martin, and gave him ſuch reaſons as impreſſed him with the importance of the truſt, and the urgency for ſecrecy, without imparting the real circumſtance. Martin and his wife were eager to make themſelves of uſe to me, and without heſitation agreed to whatever I pleaſed. They

ſhowed me a very decent retired little apartment, where Agathe might continue, unobſerved, as long as I ſhould think proper, and where I flattered myſelf ſhe would be in perfect ſafety. Alas! little aware from what quarter her greateſt danger was to ariſe!—O Riverſdale! that I might here drop the curtain! but I will be candid even at the hazard of forfeiting your eſteem, together with my own—even at the hazard of being deemed unworthy to raiſe my eyes to Louiſa . . .

Thus far, however, you will acquit me: no anchorite could have guarded againſt temptation with more ſedulous attention; for do not ſuppoſe me ſo diveſted of feeling, as to have been wholly unmoved by the beauty and partiality of Agathe. I muſt have been more or leſs than man, but aſſuredly little ſhort of a villain, to have premeditatedly aſſumed upon a preference ſo innocently betrayed, when I did not find in my heart thoſe ſentiments of reſpect and purity which ſo eminently characteriſe true love . . . But enough of proteſtations! I could not call you friend if I ſtood in need of

them: the ſimple truth muſt acquit or condemn me; I ſhall neither add to, nor take from it.

Agathe would not ſuffer me to leave her at Martin's, without a promiſe to ſee her again in the evening.

I ſaw d'Hermonville in my way back, who was juſt come from his ſiſter. She had told him that Agathe had not been miſſed until the hour of aſſembling in the *réfectoire* to ſupper. The *dortoir* of Angelique was the firſt place reſorted to in queſt of her; but Angelique could give no intelligence: the alarm then became conſiderable. The garden was ſearched, the walls examined, internally and externally, for veſtiges of ladder hooks, &c. in vain of courſe: the mode of proceeding Agathe had adopted was far too ſimple and unpremeditated to have occurred as practicable.

" La hardieſſe du projet, en fit la ſureté *."

Some of the nuns returned to Angelique, and queſtioned her with greater ſtrictneſs and ſeverity. Being perfectly innocent of con-

* The daringneſs of the project enſured it from ſuſpicion.

currence, ſhe had no difficulty to clear herſelf: but whilſt ſhe ſpoke, a paper caught the eye of one of them, which had dropped from a cap ſhe had juſt taken out of her *carton*. This was my unfortunate note, which was inſtantly ſeized upon and read; and with the moſt violent expreſſions of anger Angelique was dragged into the preſence of the Abbeſs, and there arraigned, and abuſed without mercy. D'Hermonville here indulged his turn for mimickry and ridicule, by taking off the different nuns, very much to his own ſatisfaction, and the exertion of my patience; but I had been too quick with him before, not to curb my impetuoſity now, and he at length ended with repeating the defence his ſiſter had made, which turned upon the *proof* of her being an involuntary agent, by her careleſſneſs in regard to the paper ſhe might ſo eaſily have concealed had ſhe known of it, and which was not even addreſſed to herſelf.—"Not addreſſed to herſelf!" I exclaimed, with increaſed aſtoniſhment at his inconceivable imprudence, "you did not ſo much as put a cover about it, directed to your ſiſter?"

"*Que voulez vous! on ne s'aviſe jamais*

de tout: qui diable ſe ſeroit imaginé, qu'une fille laiſſeroit la pendant cinq minutes ſeulement un carton de chiffons, ſans l'examiner de fond en comble! on ne prévoit pas les miracles *." This was too provoking to truſt myſelf to anſwer, and I only entreated to know, in as few words as poſſible, the reſult. The reſult was the acquittal of Angelique, of courſe. "O! and by the by," he added, "the moſt important of all I had like to have forgotten, which is, that upon the teſtimony of the note you are *dénoncé* to Monſieur de Vergennes, as the *raviſſeur* of a *novice*; and, for aught I know, the police may be at the hôtel d'Angleterre before you can reach it." His intolerable levity, in having waſted time ſo unneceſſarily at ſuch a moment, drove me half wild, and I ran from him almoſt in a ſtate of phrenzy.

Upon my arrival at home, the ſervants informed me that the lieutenant de police had in fact been there, and drawn up a *procès*

* Who can provide againſt every thing? How the devil ſhould it come into my head, that a girl could let a box of millinery remain five minutes in her power without turning it topſy-turvy? One does not look for miracles.

verbal upon the teſtimony of the people of the houſe, who depoſed that a young man, anſwering to the deſcription given, had been ſecreted in my apartment, and afterward conveyed away by me in a *fiacre*. I inquired of the landlord by what right he or the police interfered with any young man that came to viſit me. Monſieur le Noir knew, he ſaid, that it was a girl diſguiſed, and deſcribed her accurately; and he proceeded ſtrait to the hôtel d'Angleterre, where he ſuppoſed that I might be gone for protection. I found that the hackney coach, in which I had taken Agathe, had been traced, by means of the Laquais de Place, to the ſpot where it had broken down with us, as he had recogniſed and challenged the coachman at his return, who could give no farther account, than that, while he was buſy examining the damage of his coach, we had proceeded on foot, but in what direction he could not tell. This accident, which had appeared diſtreſſing at the time, proved the fortunate means of ſecuring the retreat of Agathe from diſcovery; for not having immediately found another coach, we had walked down a ſtreet or two, where we were

assured we should meet with one, and from ignorance of that part of Paris, got so completely out of our way before we again found one, that we could not readily be traced to Martin's.

I went immediately to the Ambassadour, who was perplexed how to act, and very much surprised at the accusation against me. The lieutenant of police had been with him to require my being given up, as a security, till the girl should be found. "He was under no obligation to give way to such a requisition," he said; "but if there were the slightest grounds for the accusation, which from his knowledge of me he knew not how to believe, he expected to hear from Versailles upon the subject, in a way that, under the present circumstances, might be very awkward."

I frankly communicated to him every particular, and endeavoured to interest him to the utmost in favour of Agathe. He good humouredly reprobated my d—d quixotism, as he called it, expressed solicitude for the poor girl, and much vexation at the whole business, but determined to go instantly to

Verſailles himſelf, and ſee the miniſter; and he left me in charge to do the honours of his table, to ſome Engliſhmen newly arrived: Lord E—— and Jack T—— were two of them; you will gueſs how freely the bottle muſt neceſſarily circulate.

At eight o'clock I received a note from the Ambaſſadour, to inform me he ſhould be detained at Verſailles till after the *coucher*; and, from the doubtful aſpect of the buſineſs, thought it might be expedient to ſave Agathe from the immediate interference of the police, by removing her into his own houſe.

I inſtantly excuſed myſelf to the company, and ſet out on foot, unwilling to hazard a diſcovery, either by taking one of the Ambaſſadour's carriages, or a hackney coach, from that neighbourhood. The air increaſed the effect of the wine, of which I had before been ſufficiently aware to determine in my own mind againſt keeping my promiſe to Agathe, until the fatal note from the Ambaſſadour forced me to forego all other conſideration. By the time I reached the houſe of Martin I muſt have been in a

ſtate of abſolute intoxication.—My ſenſes wholly diſordered . . O Riverſdale, I have no other plea to offer . . . . I know not how to proceed——

I then thought there was ſome excuſe for me; I now feel there is none . . . Can one vice ſerve as the excuſe for another! Curſed folly, to let any conſideration of conviviality or good fellowſhip throw one into a ſituation that annihilates both will and reaſon! and yet I was not ſo overpowered as to have loſt all idea of reſiſting the temptation that aſſailed me: upon my ſoul, I was conſcious, even in that ſtate, of the reſpect due to her unprotected innocence. I forced Martin to go into her apartment with me—how he afterward diſappeared, and how the artleſs effuſions of her tenderneſs at length overpowered my little remaining recollection, I cannot now tell.—Suffice it to ſay, we were both undone—her honour—my peace deſtroyed for ever!—for too powerfully does the conviction force itſelf upon me as I proceed—there can be no alternative; one only atonement remains to be made; and that now—involves the complete ſacrifice of all my earthly hopes——

The morning was pretty far advanced before I awakened to the horrible ſenſe of my atrocious conduct. The unreſtrained tenderneſs of Agathe only ſerved to heighten the poignancy of my ſelf-reproach.

In the utmoſt confuſion and perturbation, I informed her of the immediate neceſſity of repairing to the protection of the Ambaſſadour's hotel, if it were not already too late. We took a coach, and alighted at the diſtance of a ſtreet or two from the hotel, which we reached, without interruption, juſt before the Ambaſſadour himſelf returned.

He had obtained an order to the police to ſuſpend the ſearch after Agathe; but unleſs the Abbeſs herſelf gave up the point, the miniſter would interfere no farther: of the guardian there was little fear, he was too thoroughbred a courtier to reſiſt the royal will in any ſhape, but to rob Heaven of a votary, was what the Count de Vergennes could not take upon his own conſcience. It occurred to Lord —— to intereſt Madame de Remines in the buſineſs, whoſe influence was great with the *ſuperieure* of the Dames Anglaiſes; and he went ſtrait to Saint-Cyr.

Madame de Remines conſidered the ſtigma

brought upon the convent, by the elopement, as a ſufficient plea to induce the Abbeſs to give up Agathe; but her lenity could go no farther than to adviſe the ſubſtitution of ſome provincial convent, at the choice of the old Marchioneſs de Vieuxchamps, who is her intimate friend. It was deſirable on all accounts that the affair ſhould be huſhed up as ſpeedily as poſſible; but the intereſts of Heaven could not be ſacrificed. The interference of Madame de Remines ſucceeded with the Abbeſs; but no remiſſion of the ſentence of the provincial convent was to be obtained, except ſo far as that Agathe ſhould be immediately removed to the *chateau* of her aunt, in Languedoc, until the new convent ſhould be fixed upon. "And now," added the Ambaſſadour, "you are aware that it would be very improper for you to attend her, or take any ſhare in the removal. Madame de Remines writes to the Marchioneſs, and I ſhall ſend my houſekeeper and a truſty man ſervant to take care of her down; and ſo will end this troubleſome buſineſs; and I hope, Charles, you will be more wary in future how you interfere in the

reſcue of diſtreſſed damſels; we may not always get off ſo well."

A thouſand ſcorpions were at work in my breaſt, and I could articulate no anſwer. In the hope of partly concealing my agitation, I ſaid I would go and acquaint Agathe with the reſult, and prepare her for her immediate departure. The Ambaſſadour ſtopped me, and thought it would be better that I did not ſee her again. He would go to Lady Acklin, and requeſt her to take charge of Agathe until her departure, as well as aſſiſt in procuring what was requiſite for her journey.

I was inexpreſſibly relieved by this prohibition, which I could not with any kind of propriety infringe; ſtill conſcience urged me to make ſome attempt at atonement . . . ſome excuſe at leaſt to the wretched injured innocent victim.

The Ambaſſadour, miſtaking my confuſed, irreſolute appearance, for a wiſh to expoſtulate, repeated the injunction with increaſed energy: he had made himſelf reſponſible, and relied upon my honour for not involving him farther. I aſſured him I had no thought

of oppoſing his wiſh, and was but too ſenſible of all the trouble I had already occaſioned.

And I went home to ſuch a train of ſenſations and reflexions, as none, but a criminal with the rope about his neck, could envy me. I ſtrongly felt that I ought to take ſome ſtep in regard to Agathe; but what?—was the difficulty; to write—would expoſe her to ſuſpicion; and what could I ſay?—To ſee Lady Acklin could be of no avail, unleſs I ſaid more than was conſiſtent with honour and propriety. In this miſerable dilemma, between the dread of involving Agathe by whatever I might do, and feeling it barbarous to do nothing, I paſſed the remainder of the day, and the whole of the night; and at length could form no better determination than to wait upon Lady Acklin, and intreat her to inform Agathe, that I was prevented from ſeeing her by an expreſs prohibition.

But, as it frequently happens, the time loſt in heſitation deprived me of the opportunity of doing any thing; for when I came to Lady Acklin's door, I was told they were already ſet out. Her departure for the ſouth

of France, with a conſumptive daughter, had been fixed the very day before: it was delayed a few hours to equip Agathe, and as they were to proceed by ſhort ſtages, there was time ſufficient for the Marchioneſs de Vieuxchamps' anſwer to overtake them at Lyons.

No farther ſtep on my part could now be taken. I remained with my remorſe, and the apprehenſion of conſequences, which could not even be foreſeen by the unhappy victim of my ——— I know not what to call it—

I was obliged in a few days to return to London, but determined, the inſtant I ſhould again be at liberty, to travel after Agathe, and aſcertain her ſituation, fully reſolved, if the event juſtified my apprehenſions, to come forward, and offer the only reparation in my power: it then ceaſed to be a matter of choice, juſtice compelled the atonement ... My hand ſhakes as I thus trace my own condemnation; for alas! what change has taken place, but in my own inclination, that I now conſider it as a matter to conſult upon?

In two or three ſubſequent trips to Paris, which the impending negotiation obliged me

to make, I could obtain no information in regard to Agathe, either from d'Hermonville, his ſiſter, or Madame de Remines, except that ſhe was with her aunt in Languedoc, and not yet deſtined to any particular convent. I began to hope that the miſchief might have ended in the firſt indiſcretion, and that diſpleaſure, at my apparent neglect, had conquered the partiality of Agathe, when I was moſt painfully awakened to the renewed ſenſe of her wrongs, by the following letter, forwarded to me by Madame de Remines.

" Ah Monſieur! que je me doutois peu à quel point j'etois coupable, en me laiſſant aller à tout ce que je ſentois pour vous! et qu'on a bien fait de m'envoyer ici, cacher ma honte, et ma douleur! ne me mépriſez cependant pas trop Monſieur! je ſais bien qu'une fille qui oublie ce qu'elle ſe doit, ne mérite plus l'eſtime de perſonne; mais helas! ſavois je ce que je me devois? je ne ſavois que vous aimer moi, et vous me paroiſſiez ſi aimable que je n'aurois jamais crue pouvoir mal faire de vous le témoigner: mais c'eſt ma bonne couſine d'Autemar, qui m'a ouvert les yeux; qui m'a fait ſentir l'etendue de ma

faute, et qui a la bonté de la cacher à ma chere tante, car elle eſt sévère ma chere tante, elle ne pardonneroit ni à l'amour, ni à l'ignorance—un jour viendra cependant, ou il faudra bien qu'elle ſache . . . Ah Monſieur! ce moment la me fait trembler; à moins que le bon Dieu ne me faſſe peutêtre la grace de me laiſſer mourir avant de me couvrir d'opprobre; et c'eſt ce que je demande tous les jours à genoux à la Ste Vierge, qui daignera m'écouter peut-être parcequ'elle ſait bien que j'ignorois le mal que je faiſois; mais voila ce que je voudrois que vous ſuſſiez auſſi Monſieur, afin que vous ne m'otiez pas entièrement votre eſtime—epuis j'aurois en mourant une grande conſolation à penſer que vous rendez juſtice à la pureté de mes intentions, et je ſerois en vérité trop heureuſe de mourir, puiſqu' auſſi bien à quoi bon vivre quand on ne peut plus voir la perſonne qu'on aime, ni être eſtimée de qui que ce ſoit *?"

* "Ah, Sir! how little did I ſuſpect the guilt I was incurring in giving way to my feelings for you! and how properly have I been ſent hither to conceal my ſhame and my grief! do not, however, altogether deſpiſe me. I am aware that a girl, who forgets what ſhe owes to herſelf, is no longer worthy of eſteem;

This heart rending letter left me not a moment's hesitation. I flew to d'Hermonville, to request his interest with the Count, whose prejudice against me could only be softened by friendly interference.

D'Hermonville espoused my cause with warmth; but found the Count dry and inexorable. The necessity of concealing the motive that prompted my application, destroyed

but alas! did I know what was due to myself? I only knew how to love you; and you appeared so amiable, that I should never have guessed I could do wrong in proving my sense of it: but my good cousin d'Autemar has opened my eyes, and shown me the extent of my fault, and is so kind as to conceal it from my aunt; for my aunt is severe, and would forgive neither love nor ignorance. A day will come, however, in which she must know . . . Ah, Sir! I tremble at the thought, unless it should please God to let me die before I am exposed to disgrace; and this is my daily prayer, upon my knees, to the Holy Virgin, who will perhaps deign to hear me, because she knows I was ignorant of the sin I was committing: and this is what I wish you, Sir, to know, as well as her, that you may not think quite ill of me, for it would be a great comfort in my last hour, to believe that you did justice to the innocence of my intentions, and I should indeed be very happy to die; for where is the use of life, when one can no longer see those one loves, or be esteemed by any body?"

its beſt chance for ſucceſs. I had no attractions, either of rank or fortune, to counterbalance the prepoſſeſſion in favour of his friend, to whom he adhered more obſtinately than ever, in the event of Agathe not taking the veil. A mutual affection was all d'Hermonville could plead; which is not an argument of much weight in France. My religion was an inſuperable obſtacle, independent of every other. His particular antipathy to the Engliſh, not leſs ſo; and notwithſtanding the care of d'Hermonville to ſpare me the mortification of repeating all the ſlights paſſed upon my perſon and my propoſals, I underſtood enough to have rouſed every particle of pride in my compoſition—but upon this occaſion I had forfeited the right to liſten to it.

My only proſpect of ſucceſs now reſted with the old Marchioneſs, who would be the more likely to favour me, I underſtood, in conſequence of the Count's oppoſition; and to her I determined to repair without loſs of time.

Public buſineſs, however, obliged me firſt to return to England, which involved a delay of at leaſt a month. Meanwhile I wrote

to reaſſure and comfort poor Agathe, promiſing to ſee her in a few weeks; and entruſted my letter to Madame de Remines.

My return was unavoidably delayed by fortuitous circumſtances, and I was at length ſetting off for Paris, to fulfil this important and too long protracted purpoſe, when I parted from you, and ſo imprudently inſiſted upon an introduction to your ſiſter . . .

O that I had never ſeen the day! . . . The firſt inſtant I beheld her, ſtaggered every reſolve; ſtill I retained ſufficient control over myſelf to determine to ſee her no more; and could I have proceeded on my journey next morning, I had continued true to honour . . . but a note from Madame de Remines ſtopped me.

The luckleſs Agathe had, from a fall, been taken ill, and delivered at between ſix and ſeven months of a child; which, however, was alive.—What powerful ſenſations did this idea awaken in my breaſt!—I thought they muſt have ſteeled me againſt any thing; but they have ſerved only to evince, more forcibly, the irreſiſtible influence of Louiſa Riverſdale.

Madame de Remines added, that a for-

tunate fit of the gout confined the Marchioneſs to her own apartment, which gave every chance of concealing the event, under pretence of the fracture of a ſmall bone in the heel, which Mademoiſelle d'Autemar, the kind couſin of Agathe, had contrived, as the beſt excuſe for keeping her in bed. I was therefore now enjoined to delay my journey, till Agathe ſhould be ſufficiently recovered to ſee me, without danger from the agitation.

I acquieſced in the propriety of this caution, and whilſt I continued in Paris, of courſe dined daily with the Ambaſſadour; but had I received the ſlighteſt intimation that Louiſa was expected there, I had ſought the remoteſt corner of the earth ere I had incurred the danger of a ſecond meeting.

You are but too well appriſed of the reſult: ſhe came,

> ——— Like blooming Eve,
> In nature's young ſimplicity; and bluſhing
> Forth wonder, at creation's opening glow,
> She charm'd, unknowing what it is to charm.

Still believe me, Riverſdale, I have not weakly given way; I have not indulged in ſeeking her, in converſing with her; on the

contrary, I have avoided her, with a ſedulous caution, that may almoſt have ſtamped me ſavage in her opinion.

But the ſtruggle has become too powerful, and you are my only reſource. I have obtained myſelf to be made the bearer of diſpatches, which were to have been entruſted to another.

I wrote to Madame de Remines to account for my abſence, and entruſted Sir George Rutland to deliver my letter, and confirm the importance of the buſineſs with which I am entruſted. I flew to you, my laſt refuge againſt myſelf—and, alas, you are gone!

THE JOURNAL OF MISS RIVERSDALE CONTINUED *.

Arlington Street, 8th June.

There is no end to my aſtoniſhment, my dear brother! although you had prepared me for manners ſomewhat different from what

* That there may be no material break in the connection, it appears neceſſary to inform the reader, that Miſs Riverſdale went to England with Lady Frances Ruthen, ſiſter to Lord Belfont; and that before her departure from Paris, ſhe had effected the reconcilia-

my mother's repreſentation, and Lady Belfont's example, had led me to expect, ſtill every hour teems with ſurpriſe.

Lady Belfont, however, aſſures me that ſhe is not the only remaining example of a well bred, elegant, faſhionable Engliſh woman; I am to be convinced of it by ſome of her particular friends, who are not at preſent in town: in the meanwhile Lord Belfont challenged her, at breakfaſt this morning, to point out any one woman under ſixty, in the toniſh circles, who was perfectly free from the imputation of an intrigue. You may believe I looked amazed: not that I entirely gave credit to the aſſertion; for Lord Belfont's cenſoriouſneſs is equal to his wife's indulgence, whoſe mind is ſo ſpotleſs that ſhe cannot eaſily be brought to think ill of others: an impropriety muſt be very glaring indeed to call forth her cenſure.

tion between the Marquis and Marchioneſs de Sainval, of which the particulars are loſt; nor could the Editor allow himſelf to attempt to ſupply the deficiency, leſt his inadequate knowledge of the French language and manners ſhould have betrayed itſelf the more diſſatisfactorily, from the contraſt with the characteriſtic touches of Miſs Riverſdale.

The converſation had turned upon a very marked circumſtance of this kind, that had occurred at Lady S——'s laſt night, who had an aſſembly after the opera (figure to yourſelf the hours we keep). Lady Belfont joined in reprobating this inſtance of miſconduct, but Lord Belfont was inclined to involve the whole party in his abuſe: "ſome were better hypocrites than others, but never a barrel the better herring," he would anſwer for them.

Lady Belfont contended againſt the illiberality of indiſcriminate condemnation, and aſſerted, that the chief cauſe which laid the faſhionable world ſo open to criticiſm, aroſe from the glaring, *undaunted nature* of vice, which is calculated to obtrude itſelf upon the eye, whilſt virtue and delicacy are retired, and decline rather than court obſervation; "ſo that in the very ſame circles, where ſo much food is adminiſtered to ſatire, I can point out to you many an individual who merely paſſes unobſerved, becauſe ſhe is every thing ſhe ought to be."

"But is not the ſanction of her preſence an encouragement to miſconduct?" I ſaid.

"It is, perhaps, difficult to be avoided, but by perfect ſeclusion" . . .

"O ho!" exclaimed Lord Belfont, "here's a conceſſion beyond my hopes" . . .

"I only meant," interrupting him, ſmiling, "that thoſe who mix with the world at all will be likely to ſee things they cannot approve; this good, however, will ariſe from the mixture, that it affords examples of decency, and propriety of manners, which, by contraſt, become the more ſtriking. Society is aſſuredly one of the principal enjoyments of life, and to carry virtue and goodneſs into it, is taking one chance for its improvement. The diſſipated are very apt to connect an idea of gloom and moroſeneſs with retirement. Talk to them of the domeſtic virtues of the agreeable Lady M——, who is never ſeen out of her family circle; they can only conceive her to be a 'ſtupid fogram,' probably 'a methodiſt,' and thank Heaven they do not reſemble her. Could ſhe be perſuaded to come forward occaſionally, and prove what perfect cheerfulneſs, and elegance of manners, accompany her virtues, ſhe might convert their cenſure into admiration; and

ſhould only one in the number be influenced by her example, ſhe will have been of more real uſe in the world, than by indulging her turn for retirement. I have always conſidered the convents in France as conducive to the general relaxation of morals, upon this very principle, that ſhutting up piety and morality within four walls, is withdrawing them from circulation."

This accounts for Lady Belfont's devoting ſo much of her time to ſocieties ſo very unlike her, which I have thought of with ſurpriſe ſince my arrival.

"Well, Louiſa," ſaid Lord Belfont, "I don't pretend to diſpute about the cauſe; I merely aſſert a fact, and let my wife deny it if ſhe can, which is, that in whatever aſſembly ſhe takes you to, you ſhall point out to me any woman you pleaſe, and I will as inſtantly, if not point out, at leaſt name you her *private friend.*"

"Fie, my lord!" ſhe replied, "you really go ſo far upon this ſubject, that you will at length induce the world to ſay, you can only eſtabliſh your wife's reputation upon the ruin of thoſe of all her acquaintance; for I pre-

ſume at leaſt you mean to exempt me from the general charge."

"You! you are the *rara avis*, and by ſo much the more to be valued."

"Nay, nay, let me hope you allow me ſome poſitive merit of my own, and that I do not owe my whole claim to your good opinion, to the comparative worthleſſneſs of my ſex. The more highly you thought of other women, the more I ſhould be flattered by your preference, you know."

"You would have me ſuch another noodle as Charles, who you muſt know, Louiſa, is the devoted ſlave and profeſſed knight errant of womankind; and aſſerts, that no man can love one woman as ſhe deſerves, who has not a general reſpect for the whole ſex."

Fortunate was it for me, that Lord Belfont was at this moment more intent upon chooſing a criſp bit of muffin, than watching the effect of his obſervation upon his hearers. What various emotions would my countenance have betrayed, if it were faithful to the ſenſations of my mind! what true delicacy does this prove in Mr. Stanville! but

ah, my brother! if he be ſo devoted to the whole ſex, he muſt have ſeen the woman he can love as ſhe deſerves long before he met with the ill-fated Louiſa. My heart died within me at the thought.

Lord Belfont went on: "I'll ſet my experience againſt all the romantic nonſenſe you and he draw from the goodneſs of your own hearts, and which you ſo gratuitouſly transfer to the undeſerving; and I'll be curſed if I do not prize you ten times higher, for being the only woman worth loving in the world; but you are ſuch an ungrateful gipſy, that I ſuppoſe you would take your chance of loſing your hold upon your husband's affection, to get the beſt end of the argument."

"I ſhould betray great want of knowledge of mankind, indeed, my good Lord, if I were not ſatisfied to take your affection upon your own terms."

"You'll obſerve, Louiſa," interrupting Lady Belfont, "how Harriet evades the argument. I repeat my challenge: let her name me one of the faſhionable liſt that I cannot tack a partner to, and I will acknowlege her right to cavil at my cenſure."

"One! I'll name you twenty without hesitation;" and she paused.

"There, *without hesitation*, observe, and she boggles at the very first," laughing, with good humoured triumph.

"Not from the consideration of whom *I* deem blameless, but whom *you* will admit to be so. Mrs. Blandford, for instance—"

"Upon my soul, you are hard put to it, to go and rout poor Mrs. Blandford out of Warwickshire, where she has been immured ever since the death of a husband she loved to distraction, and with whom she lived but one year. She must have been in haste to inlist in the devil's service, indeed, to have accomplished it in that time, and under such circumstances."

"You will allow, however, that it is something to have devoted three years, in the prime of youth, and beauty, and general admiration, to grief for the loss of her husband."

"Ay, she had a mind to make the world talk of it."

"Now, Louisa, is that fair?" said Lady Belfont.

"I am strongly inclined to think not," I

replied, "from the impreſſion I have received in regard to Mrs Blandford through my brother, who met her at Lady Leſſingham's."

"She's come to town, then! ſhe could hold out no longer!" exclaimed Lord Belfont. "Now we ſhall ſee how *la belle veuve* will play off her widowhood."

"She ſeems to have kept it in retirement thus far, however," Lady Belfont obſerved, "ſince I have not only never met her anywhere, or heard from her, but have not even heard Charles mention her, who is far more likely to know what relates to her than myſelf—"

"How ſo, dear Lady Belfont?"—I wiſhed to aſk, Henry, but dared not.

"So Mrs. Blandford is the only one of twenty, then, is ſhe?" continued Lord Belfont.

"By no means, there's Mrs. H—."

"Mrs. H—! her houſe is the moſt notorious place of rendezvous for all the men and women of intrigue in London."

"The more her merit for having eſcaped the contagion. I will defy you to name *her* private friend."

"No thanks to her; diveſted of feeling altogether; cold as marble: it would be worth your while to hear her huſband upon that ſubject."

Here the entrance of Lady Frances Ruthen interrupted the diſcuſſion; but I muſt acknowledge I was ſtruck with the paucity of Lady Belfont's examples.

"You are come very fortunately, Frances," ſaid Lord Belfont, "for my poor wife; ſhe never ſtood more in need of an advocate that would go through thick and thin with her than at this moment."

"I'll ſwear ſhe's in the right, beforehand," replied Lady Frances.

"I knew as much; and if all your partialities were as well juſtified, I ſhould not ſo often cavil at them," added Lord Belfont, looking ſo affectionately at his wife, that I forgave him at that moment for all the humours at which I have been diſturbed, and determined never to indulge my diſpleaſure upon that head to you again, my dear brother." He then made his appeal to Lady Frances, during which I made my eſcape, to have had an hour's intercourſe with you; for which I now have great difficulty to find time.

Lady Frances ſent up word ſhe wiſhed me to accompany her to Kenſington gardens this evening, where I hope for a quiet walk, in the enjoyment of ſome of the picturesque ſcenery, which I am taught to expect in Engliſh gardens; of which Payne's-hill is the only ſpecimen I have yet ſeen.

9th June. — I had little idea, when I talked of a quiet walk, what Sunday is in Kenſington gardens; but I had no leiſure to comment either upon the beauty or animation of the ſcene; my thoughts were inſtantly confined to the vexation of finding Sir George Rutland evidently in waiting for us.

After what has paſſed, to be thus drawn into the appearance of giving encouragement to a renewal of intimacy, diſtreſſed me exceedingly. I believe I looked ſhy and diſtant; I really felt myſelf in an awkward ſituation.

Lady Frances Ruthen ſoon profeſſed herſelf tired, and propoſed to ſit down. We did not immediately find a vacant bench; and when we did, it was one of the covered ſeats, in a rather more retired part of the gardens.

We had not been long ſeated, when Lady Frances ſaw ſomebody paſs to whom ſhe had ſomething particular to ſay. "I'll be back in an inſtant," ſhe ſaid, as ſhe aroſe; "and darting acroſs the walk, ſhe took the arm of a young woman, whom ſhe led away from her company in a whiſpering converſation."

The embarraſſment of my ſituation was certainly increaſed by my ſenſe of it; and not having preſence of mind to think of any thing that could ward off the ſubject I dreaded, I ſat ſilent, and looking fooliſh, as if in expectation of it.

Sir George began. "I fear, Miſs Riverſdale, that my recurrence to Lady Riverſdale has offended you. The increaſed coldneſs of your manner is death to me. I would not perſecute you; I ſubmit to your award but I cannot bear up under your diſpleaſure ſuffer me to entreat your pardon."

"There can be no room for forgiveneſ where there is no offence. I muſt feel myſelf honoured by the good opinion you profeſs of me, and grieved that I am precluded by its exceſs, from evincing the eſteem you worthy character entitles you to."

"I wiſhed for an opportunity, Miſs R

verſdale, to diſclaim every other wiſh for the preſent, but that of being reſtored to the friendly footing upon which you had condeſcended to admit me. I have been too precipitate; time only can ſhow whether or not I may be worthy of the high honour to which I had dared to aſpire. The ſincere devotion of an honeſt heart is the chief merit I boaſt; and ſhould you, upon more thorough knowledge of me, and a nearer view of the world, deem it eligible to prefer ſolid, rational comforts to ſplendid endowments, I would then venture to come forward, and ſay that every thought and action of my life ſhould be ſubſervient to your pleaſure."

"I thought that I had been ſo explicit with Madame de Sainval upon this ſubject, as to leave no room for the appeal to my mother, which has been, and is unſpeakably diſtreſſing to me. I have ſo much to apprehend from perſuaſions, which ought to have the force of commands, but which I unfortunately have not power to obey, that I ſee no other mode of doing juſtice to you and to myſelf, than to withdraw from keeping up an acquaintance that would have afforded

me true ſatisfaction to have cultivated, upon any other terms than thoſe of future hopes."

"I here relinquiſh every pretenſion that may be a bar to the happineſs of being admitted into your ſociety, Miſs Riverſdale," he replied, in a tone that penetrated my heart with the pain I was inflicting upon his. "Many will *boaſt* to you of diſintereſted love; I will *prove* mine to be ſo. Your happineſs, in whatever way it can be effected, is my firſt object; my own, a ſecondary conſideration—Upon my ſoul it is; and did I know the man more likely to promote it, you ſhould ſee the ſacrifice I am capable to make, and your eſteem would repay me."

The return of Lady Frances relieved me from the embarraſſment of making an anſwer to this generous, noble-minded man, but to produce a greater—for with her came Mr. Stanville.

It was impoſſible that the agitation of Sir George, and my perplexity, ſhould eſcape obſervation. Mr. Stanville's countenance underwent an inſtantaneous change, from the ſprightly animated look, with which he had approached, to an air of diſmay, that

ſeemed ſcarcely to leave him the power of utterance.

Lady Frances endeavoured to reſtore his ſelf-poſſeſſion by a whiſper, but in vain. Sir George ſeemed unconſcious of giving cauſe for obſervation, and remained abſorbed in thought. Lady Frances made an effort to rouſe him, with as little ſucceſs. I tried to talk of the company, of the gardens—but it was equally fruitleſs; ſhe was by this time ſo overpowered by the ſituation of both her friends, that ſhe could make no reply, and continued to look from one to the other, with intermediate appeals to Heaven, by caſting up her eyes with ſo much more meaning than it was proper to betray, that I ſaw no reſource but to advert to the lateneſs of the hour, and propoſe going home.

This was immediately complied with, and her carriage being a chariot, removed the difficulty of offering a conveyance to the gentlemen, who walked away ſeparately after putting us into it; and thus began and ended the only interview I have had with Mr. Stanville for this laſt week.

The moment we were alone, Lady Frances

Ruthen exclaimed, "My ſweet creature! was ever diſtreſs equal to that of which you are at this inſtant the cauſe to thoſe two unhappy men!"

"I believe my own is at leaſt equal to theirs; ſurely nothing could be more embarraſſing than your ladyſhip's leaving me tête a tête with Sir George!"

"Nothing could be more unintentional, my love; the ſight of Mrs. Delaynes, whoſe unhappineſs has kept me awake theſe two nights, threw me quite off my guard; and I never conſidered what I had done, till your diſordered looks ſtruck me at my return."

"I hope, then, you have at leaſt had the ſatisfaction of being relieved from the anxiety Mrs. Delaynes has occaſioned you?" wiſhing to change the ſubject.

"Yes, thank Heaven! Jim is now in a fair way."

"What age is he?"

"She don't exactly know."

"O! a ſervant? I imagined it to have been her ſon."

"No, it is her monkey—and the moſt intereſting creature—"

I was too much engroſſed to ſmile, as you will probably do, at Lady Frances and her friend's misfortunes.

"But, my ſweeteſt Louiſa, what new rigour have you been exerciſing upon the unhappy Sir George?"

"I have exerciſed none but what conſiſtency called for; but ſurely, after what had paſſed with your ladyſhip's knowledge, he ought neither to have wiſhed, nor have been allowed, to be in waiting there to join our party, as he clearly was."

"Why, my lovely angel, what could I poſſibly do? Heaven is my witneſs, I would not willingly increaſe your difficulties, and between two ſuch men, I too well know, though love be out of the queſtion, how your feeling heart muſt be torn, and every pang of it is doubly felt by mine; ſtill, how could I refuſe his earneſt ſupplications for a favour ſo very trifling as this? It is not in my nature to withſtand the entreaties of the unhappy—"

"Not even when compliance does but increaſe their ſufferings?"

"My deareſt creature, I never find time to reflect upon that till afterward."

This is ſo true, it left me no reply to make. Her feelings completely outrun her judgment upon every occaſion. To the warmeſt of friendly hearts, and an underſtanding above the common level, ſhe joins a ſentimental enthuſiaſm, and an imagination ſo highly wrought by novel reading, that ſhe not only involves herſelf in every body's diſtreſſes, but frequently increaſes both the reality and the ſenſe of them by her mode of participation.

"Do not you think poor Charles looks wretchedly?" Lady Frances went on, without ſtopping for an anſwer. "Angelic being that he is! ſo noble! and ſo unhappy! I proteſt the very ſight of him awakens every ſympathetic ſenſibility of my ſoul—"

She ſtopped. I trembled with eagerneſs for her to proceed, though I dared not truſt my voice with a queſtion. My looks probably betrayed my emotion; for, as ſhe fixed her eyes full upon me, ſhe continued, "Could any one ſuppoſe *that* countenance to belong to a heart ſo inacceſſible! the racks, the tortures, that rend his manly breaſt!—"

"You do not impute them to me, Lady Frances?"

"To you, and to another lovely object."

"Another!—" I faintly uttered.

"My charming girl, how this amiable ſenſibility becomes you! It quite ſubdues the prudent reſolve to confine my diſcoveries to my own breaſt; I cannot reſiſt imparting to you his unhappy ſituation. Mrs. Blandford has for years inſpired Charles with the pureſt Platonic affection, and returned it.—At the very inſtant that the death of her huſband leaves her at liberty to unite her fate with his, he ſees you, and paſſion takes unbounded poſſeſſion of his ſoul: imagine the conflict—"

I interrupted her with a precipitancy I could not ſuppreſs. "Surely, Madam, in whatever way your ladyſhip may have made this diſcovery, it is not calculated for my participation. I entreat to be allowed to remain ignorant of what Mr. Stanville has not thought proper to impart."

"This enchanting, delicate forbearance," (ſhe gave me credit beyond my due, my dear brother) "ſtill enhances your other perfections, but to betray Charles in this inſtance, may prove the moſt effectual means to ſerve him."

" So far, Madam, as it more ſtrongly points out the rigorous line of conduct which can alone reſcue me from the very humiliating light in which ſuch a diſtinction places me, and which may effectually put an end to conflicts . . . ."

" *Humiliating light*, do you call it?" interrupted Lady Frances, eagerly; " the humiliation is ſurely Mrs. Blandford's, after ſo many years of the pureſt attachment, to have his mind at length alienated."

" His mind remains hers, if I underſtood your ladyſhip right; and, independently of *that*, my heart revolts at any paſſion I may have inſpired."

" I perfectly underſtand the delicacy of your ideas, my love. Aſſuredly Mrs. Blandford poſſeſſes his better part: at the ſame time, in ſuch a man as him, paſſion itſelf muſt be ſo refined, that both might have cauſe to be ſatisfied; and ſince the laws are ſo abſurdly rigorous here, as to confine matrimony to one object only, I am of opinion Mrs. Blandford ought to be ſatisfied, to follow the example of diſintereſted liberality of ſentiment he ſet her in forming the Platonic connection with her during the life of a huſ-

band ſhe adored: why ſhould it not continue equally perfect whilſt he adores another wife?"

"This is really, Madam, a theory ſo new, as to be above my comprehenſion."

"You aſtoniſh me! I ſhould have conceived your mind to be equal to all thoſe elegant diſcriminations that ſoar ſo far above vulgar prejudices. Did you never hear of the German Count, who owed his liberation from ſlavery to the exertions of a lovely girl, who attached herſelf to his deſtiny, and was received with grateful tranſport by his wife; who, in return for the obligation, agreed to take her into the matrimonial partnerſhip* for life? But you ſhall peruſe a tract of mine, which will be ſhortly publiſhed, for you ſurely have a capacity for ſublime conceptions, which merits cultivation. I entitle my eſſay, "*The Philoſophy of Sentiment*;" and I truſt it will be found to abound with novelties which have hitherto eſcaped the obſervation of moral writers, for want of that

* Goethe has ſince founded his play of Stella upon this anecdote.

minute inveſtigation with which I boaſt of having ſcrutiniſed the human heart."

Fortunately for me, this topic ſuperſeded, during the remainder of the drive, that which had ſuggeſted it, and left me at liberty to indulge a train of thought, which, though not of the happieſt kind, was far too intereſting to give way to her philoſophic ſpeculations.

Here then, my deareſt brother, is the clew to Mr. Stanville's inconſiſtency. My form happens to be caſt in a mould that has attracted his eye and fancy, whilſt Mrs. Blandford is in poſſeſſion of every delicate, refined feeling of his heart—and Mrs. Blandford, no doubt, is well entitled to them. I will endeavour to be neither unjuſt nor illiberal in appreciating her merit; but I here reſign every thought of Mr. Stanville to her ſuperiour claims.

I was not quite unprepared for this, Henry: the idea of Mrs. Blandford, and his high panegyric upon her, have more than once obtruded themſelves in revolving the ſtrange inconſiſtencies that have of late diſturbed me; but not yet being an adept in

Lady Frances Ruthen's theory, I did not underſtand the compatibility of an attachment to Mr. Stanville, with that conjugal adoration which has involved a three years ſecluſion from the world.

I perceive I have many new leſſons to learn in this famed London. I cannot yet be a fair judge, but I will acknowledge to my brother, that I am inclined to regret the ſimple ſtyle and manners of our ſociety at Geneva.

11*th*.—Mrs. Blandford had left London ſoon after you ſaw her, Henry, and only returned about a week ago, without having given notice of it to Lady Belfont. No wonder we have ſeen nothing of Mr. Stanville: and it was to Mrs. Blandford's houſe in Warwickſhire he went, when he left town ſo abruptly. I owe this intelligence to Lady Frances Ruthen. Lady Belfont ſeldom mentions her brother. I imagine his reſerve and inconſiſtencies diſturb her: it is natural they ſhould. She has a right to his confidence, which I do not underſtand his withholding: but I have none to judge or blame, and

ſhall not ſuffer myſelf to do either. My mind is nearly made up on this ſubject: I feared it would have been a harder ſtruggle than I find it; but it is not ſo very difficult to thoſe, who think ſeriouſly, to forego happineſs in this world, and bend their eye upon a future ſtate, where pure affection will unite all hearts—

Let not Sir George Rutland, however, be again brought forward, or any other man whatever—though I may be reſigned under abſence of happineſs, I could not devote myſelf to poſitive miſery. O my brother! that you were at hand to ſupport and ſave me!

13*th*.—My obſervation, a day or two ago, upon the change in Engliſh manners, was meant to be introductory to the account of Lady S—'s aſſembly after the opera. I deviated, unintentionally, however, into other matters, and have now to relate the events of an evening altogether ſo faſhionable, and ſo new, as to throw the aſſembly of Lady S. quite into the back ground. Take the account while the impreſſion is yet ſtrong; the

occurrences of life do not ſeem calculated to take laſting hold upon my thoughts.

Lady Belfont's invitations for the evening were to Mrs. Burford's aſſembly, and Mrs. Harden's ball.

Mrs. Burford being of the very firſt ton, had promiſed me a ſcene of brilliant faſhion, far beyond the Ducheſs of B——'s laſt night; where in fact the company had appeared of that quiet, reſpectable, irreproachable ſort, which affords little to criticiſe, and of courſe nothing to talk of, and is therefore diſtinguiſhed by the finer ſet as *quizzical*.

The invitation to Mrs. Harden's ball came from Lady Ruſhby, who told Lady Belfont ſhe had fifty tickets to diſtribute, and as I muſt certainly be fond of dancing, I might take a partner with me, and as many more young men as I wiſhed to introduce.

Of courſe I had no wiſh to avail myſelf of any ſuch liberty. It was, however, particularly obliging in Lady Ruſhby, I thought, to attend in this manner to the difficulty a perfect ſtranger, like me, might be under, for want of acquaintance.

Lady Belfont's dinner company ſtaid and played at cards till near ten, which ſhe

judged would be too early an hour for Mrs. Burford's aſſembly; but having formerly been intimately acquainted with her mother, and having ſeen but little of Mrs. Burford herſelf ſince ſhe came to town, ſhe wiſhed to be among the firſt, to enjoy ſome quiet converſation.

At ten, therefore, we went. When we came to Mrs. Burford's door, the ſervants looked ſurpriſed, and a ſort of buſtling whiſper among them, ſuggeſted a doubt to Lady Belfont that we were too early. Upon inquiring whether any body were yet come, we were told that Mrs. Burford had but juſt gone up from dinner to dreſs; and the candles were not lighted in the drawing rooms.

Lady Belfont obſerved, that we ſhould hurry her by going in, and propoſed to go and paſs half an hour with the Dowager Lady Darly, by which time Mrs. Burford might be ready for us. We did ſo.

Lady Darly's ſervants ſeemed equally unprepared, for a very different reaſon. The porter told us, my lady had juſt retired into her dreſſing room, *to go to bed.* Mrs. Morriſon, however, came into the hall, to inquire who the viſitors were? that in caſe it

ſhould be Lady Belfont, ſhe might be admitted, as her lady had not yet begun to undreſs, and had no objection to be kept up half an hour longer by the company of a friend.

The dear old lady received us with all the gayety that ſo peculiarly animates her converſation, and diverted herſelf and us, by the compariſon ſhe drew between her mode of life and that of Mrs. Burford. The half hour was inſenſibly prolonged to near an hour, from the difficulty of even knowing how to break away from her; and it was conſiderably paſt eleven when we returned to Mrs. Burford's.

We now found the rooms lighted up, and herſelf juſt come into them, with one lady and two gentlemen, who ſeemed to have dined there.

Our reception was peculiarly obliging. Mrs. Burford expreſſed regret to have ſeen ſo little of Lady Belfont, which ſhe attributed to the impoſſibility of doing what one wiſhed in London; and added ſome flattering things to me. I was ſtruck with the extreme elegance in the figure and manner of her companion, whom I had a confuſed idea of having

ſeen before, and was waiting an interval of converſation, to inquire her name of Lady Belfont; but the quick ſucceſſion of company now coming in prevented me, and drew all my attention to the beauty of the women, and ſplendour of their dreſſes.

I was ſtruck with the change in Mrs. Burford's manner, from the friendly frankneſs teſtified at our entrance, to the careleſs indifference with which ſhe let every one come up to the chimney corner in the third room, where ſhe had taken her ſtation, making a ſlight curteſy, as the groom of the chambers named them to her, accompanied by a ſtill ſlighter "How d'ye do?" uttered with an unmeaning ſmile and a haughty air, which I at firſt attributed to pride; and concluded that the company of this evening were an inferiour ſet, having overheard one young lady obſerve to another, as they were coming up the room, "This is Mrs. Burford's promiſcuous night, next Friday will be ſelect." Chance having, however, afterward thrown me within hearing of the names, I was aſtoniſhed to ſee Ducheſſes, Marchioneſſes, Counteſſes, received with the ſame dry diſtance, though with now and then the addi-

tion of " Will you be ſo good as to make your own party, if you like to play?" which many had done without ſtaying to be bidden.

At length a name, which I did not hear, ſeemed to electrify Mrs. Burford, and ſhe darted into the middle of the room, to welcome with friendly greeting this new arrival, ſhaking hands, and uttering affectionate reproaches, at the ſame time, for being ſo late, as the guinea caſſino table had waited to be made up. In ſaying this, ſhe led her friend to a table, and beckoning to the lady, and one of the gentlemen we had originally found there, Mrs. Burford ſat down to cards, and appeared to trouble her head very little farther about any body.

My curioſity was excited by this marked predilection, and I learnt that it was Mrs. Farnham, whoſe huſband (of low extraction), from having made himſelf variouſly uſeful to ſome faſhionable young men, had been brought forward in the toniſh circles, and gratified by the flattering diſtinction of having his dinners quoted, and his claret and burgundy drunk, until, his reſources and credit failing, he had been moſt inhumanely

thrown into the King's Bench, by his unfeeling tradeſmen, where his *amiable* wife, whoſe attachment to him is quite *proverbial*, regularly viſits him, *as often* as her exemption from engagements, and the loan of *a carriage*, enable her to do ſo; nay, ſhe was even once, upon an emergence of his being taken ill, known to go—in a *hackney coach*.

Although I did not quite join with my informer, in admiration of Mrs. Farnham's conjugal merits, I reproached myſelf for having ſo precipitately accuſed Mrs. Burford of a ſupercilious arrogance, quite incompatible with the kindneſs of heart, and delicacy of feeling, which now ſo evidently, I thought, prompted her attentions to a woman in diſtreſs.

Lord Belfont approached me, to inquire whether, from what I ſaw to night, I was inclined to favour his opinion, or Lady Belfont's, in regard to the fine world?

"I have juſt detected myſelf in a miſtake, my lord, that will make me cautious how I form an opinion; but pray ſatisfy my curioſity in regard to the lady we found here?"

"Why, child, what is become of your

memory and your eyeſight? it was only laſt week you were in ſuch raptures with her in the character of ——"

"Impoſſible! you don't mean — —— the actreſs?"

"Moſt aſſuredly; who elſe could be half ſo elegant or attractive?"

"That was what inſtantly caught my attention, but I obſerved beſides, that ſhe has been the next object of every one's civilities after Mrs. Burford; and then ſeeing her ſelected for the guinea party, I concluded her to be of the firſt conſequence."

"And ſo ſhe is, both from her tranſcendent talents and her intimacy with Mrs. Burford, who is at the very top of the ton. Do you carry prejudice ſo far, Louiſa, as to make ſituation in life an objection?"

"Far from it, my lord; you muſt not always interpret ſurpriſe into diſapprobation: I have ever deemed merit and talents the firſt objects of reſpect; but I did not expect this opinion to obtain in the very great world."

Lord Belfont ſmiled.

"And pray who is the gentleman?"

" A foreigner of royal blood; the — of ——"

I gloried in my country, which thus admitted of ſetting all paltry accidental diſtinctions of rank and title at nought, in favour of ſuperiour merit and undeſerved misfortune.

An event ſoon occurred, however, to unſettle my opinions again.

The Ducheſs of Doncaſter was announced, with another lady, whoſe arm ſhe held, and led her up to Mrs. Burford's table, ſaying, " Give me leave to introduce Mrs. Jones to you?" Mrs. Burford, without raiſing her eyes, or addreſſing a word of civility to Mrs. Jones, returned a kind of half bow to the Ducheſs, and ſaid, " They have been waiting for your Grace at commerce this hour, and Mr. Burford has at length undertaken to play till you came; do ſet him at liberty, for you know he is never happy till he gets to faro."

" I ſhould have been here ſooner," the Ducheſs replied, " but the unexpected arrival of Mrs. Jones from Dorſetſhire, and the neceſſity of equipping her a little decently

before I could produce her here, delayed me;" and as she said this she moved towards the commerce table, followed by Mrs. Jones, who did not seem quite to relish her reception.

"Did you ever know any thing like bringing Mrs. Jones, without asking leave before hand?" said Mrs. Burford to her party. "I have no notion of such Duchess-like airs; I hope I showed her I have not. I make a point of admitting nobody into *my* house but whom I invite *myself*." I did not at that moment understand the full meaning of this, but the course of the evening enlightened me. "And such a poor, stupid, countryfied looking thing!" she continued; "I declare she's quite a disgrace to one's party; and married to a fusty clergyman, whom nobody knows!"

"She is the Duchess's own niece," observed Mrs. Farnham.

"Not the better born for that," Mrs. Burford replied.

"A woman of extraordinary understanding and accomplishments, I have been told," said — ——, "Invaluable in her domestic circle."

"Why, then, to her domeſtic circle ſhe had better confine herſelf, till ſhe acquires talents better calculated for the world—thoſe of dreſs and play. I imagine ſhe and the parſon cheer their evenings by two or three hits at ſixpenny backgammon—and did you ever ſee ſuch a figure in your life? The Ducheſs's woman has tricked her out with ſome of her grace's caſt-off caps—"

I now diſcovered, to my own mortification, and Lord Belfont's amuſement, what the talents and accompliſhments are, which go before rank and ſituation in the fine world.

"Do but ſee," exclaimed Mrs. Farnham, "how ſhe ſtands gawking and ſtaring about her, without a ſoul to ſpeak to, he! he! he! I declare it's quite too good. O dear, and there's Jem Jeſſop taking a ſurvey of her with his glaſs. I wiſh I could catch his eye, I would really get him to go and quiz her, out of mere good nature, poor thing, to ſave her from appearing ſuch a ſolitary numps—I proteſt he's going to do it of his own accord. I'd give a guinea to be within hearing."

"It ſtands you in more than that already," ſaid Mrs. Burford, with ſome diſpleaſure,

" In your attention to Jem Jeſſop, you have twice broke the *ten* I had made for myſelf; and here's great caſſino loſt, and the rubber along with it."

A claim of five guineas, in payment of a full rubber, ſeemed to recall Mrs. Farnham's thoughts, rather diſagreeably, to what ſhe was about. " Curſe her ſcarecrow figure!" ſhe exclaimed; " I hardly remember to have been guilty of ſuch an overſight before. That's five I owe you, then, — ——" turning to her right hand antagoniſt.

" You may *owe* the D—. *I* have paid — ——" replied Mrs. Burford, with a ſly wink to her friend.

" Does that wink imply any particular intimacy between Mrs. Farnham and the foreigner?" I aſked Lord Belfont; " for your lordſhip will perceive I begin to be a little more at home in theſe matters."

" Yes, yes, an evening or two here will form your mind wonderfully; but Mrs. Burford only means, that Mrs. Farnham, not being poſſeſſed of caſh, *never pays at all*, and as the D. is probably not aware of that little circumſtance, ſhe ſcreens her friend, and makes over the debt to him."

"And Mrs. Farnham ſits down to the higheſt play in the room, without a guinea in her pocket?"

"To be ſure, in hopes of getting ſome, you know. The chances are all in her favour; whatever ſhe wins is clear gain, and what ſhe loſes ſhe's never the poorer for."

"And Mrs. Burford abets this, at the expenſe of an unwarned foreigner?"

"How can ſhe help it? nobody that was *warned* would ſit down, you know?"

"And this in my own dear England!" I exclaimed, "of which I have always felt ſo proud."

"Ay, and a good deal in it to be proud of too, notwithſtanding," cried Lord Belfont; "don't let Mrs. Burford's aſſociates ſtamp the national character in your mind."

By this time Jem Jeſſop had made his way to Mrs Jones, and, ſo far from turning her into ridicule, ſeemed to be converſing with more polite and reſpectful obligingneſs than I had obſerved in the general addreſs of the ſmart men, even to the firſt women in the room.

I remarked this to Lord Belfont. "Now to tranſlate that into plain Engliſh," he re-

plied, "I muſt inform you that Jem Jeffop is a thorough bred politician, and Doctor Jones happening to be rector of the borough that returns him to parliament, and to have great influence with his pariſhioners, Jem thinks it very well worth while to aſſume, for a moment, manners which he would not for the world endanger his conſequence with the fine women, by allowing himſelf to be really poſſeſſed of, perfectly aware that elegant impertinence would not ſucceed with Mrs Jones."

I imagine my countenance betrayed ſome little vexation, at being thus conſtantly tranſlated out of all the favourable meanings I affixed to what I ſaw; for Lord Belfont added, "Watch him when he leaves Mrs. Jones, and if he do not ſoon convince you of what I have ſaid, I will agree to let you join my wife againſt me in future—"

And ſure enough, upon quitting Mrs. Jones, he came towards our ſide of the room, and completely reſcued his character from every impeachment of politeneſs, by throwing himſelf into a chair to which a lady of very decidedly high faſhion was making her way, and with a half yawn and a ſtretch, ſaid to her, "What a d—d bore a *mélange*

of this kind is!—I wonder Mrs. Burford don't cut half her viſiting liſt:—it would be friendly in you to adviſe her, Lady Jane."

"Lord, no, I like it," was the reply. "I told her I would come to night, on purpoſe for the amuſement of quizzing, if I could but get a ſeat to obſerve upon them at my eaſe as they paſs."

"You have no chance for that, but by making up a caſſino, or accepting the half of my chair. I would ſuffer any inconvenience to accommodate you."

"You are more flattering *by half* than I expected," returned Lady Jane, laughing, "and if I don't meet with any body that will carry their civility *half* a ſtep farther, I ſhall be reduced to avail myſelf of your offer; for I poſitively cannot ſtand five minutes longer, I'm ſo fagged with the drawing room."

"How the devil could you miſmanage it ſo as to let that fag you?" ſaid he, without ſtirring. "I thought you always contrived to make it half an hour's buſineſs, by going very late, and throwing yourſelf immediately in the way of being ſpoken to."

"Why don't you know that I have t

misfortune of being cousin's cousin to the bride that was presented to day, and was of course upon duty in her train?"

"Gad, I protest there she comes!" cried Jem, turning his glass full upon her. "How eminently well she is dressed!—and Lord Kelswick and the Duke of Berkshire in attendance upon her already. I must go and make my bow;" and starting up, he left Lady Jane the disposal of the *whole* chair, whilst he entered into a very animated conversation with the bride, and quite eclipsed her former attendants.

"And pray who is Jem Jessop, who seems to be of such first-rate consequence with the women, and cut out the men at pleasure?"

"That is a question," said Lord Belfont, "which I cannot so easily answer, his reign having commenced during my absence; never having heard any mention made of his connections, however, I conclude he does not particularly pride himself upon his ancestry. His consequence has, I believe, originated in a school intimacy with the Marquis of K——, which was renewed abroad, where his superiour knowledge of the languages proved useful to his lordship. They

returned together, and being poſſeſſed of the happy talent of availing himſelf of circumſtances as they offered, he has puſhed himſelf not only into the firſt circles, but to take the lead in them: his friend has likewiſe brought him into parliament."

"And he is probably poſſeſſed of a fortune to bear him out, in vying with the rich and great?"

"Not a ſixpence that I know of, ſave what his aſſiduity at the gaming table may have ſupplied him with; and the ſeat in parliament ſerves as a convenient ſcreen from creditors."

"And his *nickname?*"

"Merely the abbreviation of James, by which his cronies firſt diſtinguiſhed him, and which it is become faſhionable for daſhing men to preſerve. You will hear of *Jack* Maunders, and *Tom* Whim, and others that do not occur to me; and for any woman to ſay Mr. James Jeſſop, or Mr. Thomas Whim, would ſtamp her a *quiz* at once."

Lady Belfont had by this time riſen from the whiſt table, and entered into converſation with Mrs. Jones, in whoſe countenance there is a prepoſſeſſing expreſſion of benevolence

and animated ſenſe, which more than overbalances the timidity of manner and ſimplicity of dreſs, that had provoked ſuch ſevere animadverſion. I immediately joined them, and found her congratulating herſelf upon the renewal of an old acquaintance. The Ducheſs of Doncaſter, who was within hearing, aſked whether Lady Belfont were going to Mrs. Harden's ball? and upon being anſwered in the affirmative, added, "Do be ſo kind, then, as to take charge of Mrs. Jones. I ſhall look in for ten minutes myſelf, in my way home, and relieve your ladyſhip from any farther trouble about her."

Lady Belfont readily complied; upon which a lady called acroſs the room, "For Heaven's ſake, who is this Mrs. Harden, that every body ſeems to be going to?"

"I can't gueſs, for my life," replied the ducheſs, "I never heard of her before laſt night."

"I thought I underſtood your grace was going there?" ſaid Lady Belfont.

"O yes, ſo I am, to oblige Lady Rachel Lyme, who has taken her up, and invited her company for her, and particularly requeſted that two or three of us ſhould ap-

pear there, were it but for five minutes, to give it a certain eclat."

"I hear it's to be monſtrouſly expenſive and magnificent," ſaid Lady Jane; "and if it had not involved the neceſſity of viſiting her afterward, I would oblige Lady Rachel by going too."

"As to ſending one's name to grace her card rack, I don't think there's much in that, if it be required," anſwered the ducheſs: "but I ſhould never think of inviting her to my houſe; you know that's a very different thing."

"True; as you ſay," laughing, "if ſticking up one's name by the ſide of her chimney ſatisfies her, in return for ſpending ſome thouſands to obtain it, I don't ſee why it ſhould be grudged; and ſo if you'll take me, ducheſs, I'll attend you there."

"I ſhall be delighted," returned her grace, "becauſe having ſomebody to laugh with, makes it ſo much better, you know; only for pity's ſake, Lady Jane, take care Lady Rachel don't overhear you, you are apt to be ſo very candid and above board in your ridicule; and ſhe's quite in earneſt about it, I aſſure you."

"Don't you incline to be a little ſorry for poor Mrs. Harden, who ſeems to have thrown away ſo much money and trouble to pleaſe an ungrateful world?" ſaid Mrs. Jones, when we were in the carriage.

"I don't quite underſtand this new mode of not inviting one's own company," replied Lady Belfont. "Probably Lady Rachel Lyme is ſome young married woman, to whom Mrs. Harden is good-humouredly giving a ball, and whom ſhe indulges in pleaſing herſelf in the company; and if ſo, ſhe is very ill requited indeed, I think."

Lord Belfont ſmiled. "I ſay nothing—you know, Louiſa, I am always abuſed for ſeeing things in their true light; I am determined my wife ſhall judge for herſelf to night."

We were long in getting up to the door, which gave Mrs. Jones time to make many original, pleaſant obſervations; and ſhe drew a compariſon between a town and country life with much taſte and feeling, as well as ſtrong traits of humour.

Here is another inſtance where, as in the caſe of Lady Belfont, I felt ſtrong partiality upon ſlight acquaintance. There is an in-

ſtinctive, mutual attraction, I believe, in true goodneſs, which outſtrips judgment and reflexion: their corroborating evidence afterward ſupplies a reaſon to hold out to the world, but the friendſhip is formed before there is time for the cold inveſtigation.

Mrs. Jones inquired after Mr. Stanville, and ſpoke of him in terms of great admiration. She alluded to ſome particular circumſtance which had raiſed him high in her eſteem: it was not explained, and I did not venture to aſk any queſtions. Of what importance can it now be to me? The leſs I hear of his merits the better, except for Lady Belfont's ſake, indeed, who has ſuch cauſe to be proud of her brother. Mrs. Jones is an intimate acquaintance of Mrs. Blandford's, and ſpoke ſuch praiſes of *her* too! Is it not a little odd, that an inſtance ſo uncommon, as an avowed Platonic attachment between a young, handſome, ſingle man, and a very beautiful young married woman, ſhould ſeem to be ſo perfectly underſtood and admitted, as never to be glanced at by the tongue of ſlander? This was a doctrine you held inadmiſſible, my dear brother, when diſcuſſing the ſubject of Prince Po-

linski. It probably reſts upon the high character of the parties.—But how have I got into this ſubject, which I ſat down with ſuch a predetermination to avoid? I wiſh to eſcape from my own heart, by forcing, even in ſolitude, my thoughts back into the turmoil and follies of the world.

Proceed we then to Mrs. Harden's, where in good truth there was folly ſufficient to ſatisfy any ſon of diſſipation.

We felt diſtreſſed upon our firſt entrance, from not knowing, even by ſight, the miſtreſs of the houſe. She had been pointed out, however, to Lord Belfont, at the opera; "and you will ſoon ſee that it is not eaſy to miſtake her," ſaid he.

"Not eaſy, indeed!" repeated Mrs. Jones, upon Mrs. Harden's coming towards us almoſt immediately after. "Could it be ſuppoſed poſſible, that at this time, when every one ſeems to claim the privilege of ſingularity, for I have ſcarcely ſeen any two people dreſſed alike to night, that ſhe ſhould have found means ſo eminently to outſtar the reſt?"

It turned chiefly, I believe, upon the perfect contraſt between her perſon and her

dreſs: the one was awkward and vulgar beyond deſcription, whilſt the other was the moſt expenſively faſhionable that could be deviſed.

Figure to yourſelf, a tall, fat, red noſed, elderly woman, tricked out by the hands of faſhion itſelf, in the ſemblance of Mrs. Beauvais (for Lady Rachel, deſirous to make the beſt of her *protégée*, had obtained her perſonal attendance at Mrs. Harden's toilette); every *outré* appendage that could be contrived to hang upon her, was added to an immenſe diſplay of diamonds. This blazing figure was preceded by Lady Rachel Lyme; a little, ſhrivelled, paralytic ſpright, with a ſhaking head, the reddeſt cheeks, the blackeſt eyebrows, and the whiteſt teeth that Bond-ſtreet could ſupply, tittering, tripping, flirting, at ſixty, with all the juvenility of ſixteen. Mrs. Harden, eternally bawling to her, "Who's this?"—"Who's that?"—as ſhe miſſed catching the names that were announced to her at their entrance; whilſt her attention was ſo rivetted, to the not loſing ſight of her conductreſs, that ſhe kept entangling her feet in every train, running her balloon hat into every eye, and the feathers into every candle ſhe came near.

Lord Belfont was in raptures. "There!" he cried, "that's the timid, innocent, young thing," ſhowing Lady Rachel, "to whoſe account Lady Belfont was willing to ſet down the extravagance of Mrs. Harden in giving this ball."

Even Lady Belfont's good nature could not withſtand joining in the laugh the contraſt excited. "I begin to fear, Louiſa," ſhe whiſpered, "that I ſhall, for once, be obliged to acknowledge my huſband in the right, at the hazard of increaſing the rigour of his cenſures; but I really am at a loſs to find an admiſſible motive to excuſe the part either of theſe ladies is acting this evening."

Mrs. Harden preſently bolted forward, attended by a young man, whoſe glaſs, unremittingly directed at me, had for ſome time paſt been very troubleſome. "Miſs," cried ſhe, with a provincial dialect, "here's a young beau dying for the honour of your hand in a minuet."

"Gad ha mercy! a minuet! My go madam, do ye take me to be come out of the tombs?" exclaimed the young man. "For beauty's ſake, don't affix ſuch a ridicule to me!"

"Well, well, a country dance, then, or a cowtillion, it be all the ſame to Miſs," reſumed Mrs. Harden. "I didn't know as minuets was out of date, not I."

I begged to be excuſed dancing.

"Merciful gracious! What, come to a ball, and not dance! Do, pray, my lady, lay your commands upon Miſs, to dance with Mr.— whatd'yecallum here, as aſked me to introduce him on purpoſe."

Mr. Whatd'yecallum had, however, quietly turned upon his heel at my anſwer, and reſumed his former attitude.

"I have no commands to lay upon Miſs Riverſdale," returned Lady Belfont, ſmiling; "but as ſhe is not paſſionately fond of dancing, and unacquainted with the gentleman, perhaps—"

"Unacquainted!" interrupted Mrs. Harden; "merciful gracious! why what can that ſignify? No more a'n't I, if you come to that; but I wa'n't a bit the leſs willing to oblige him, for I dare be bound, as he is my lord ſomething or other, notwithſtanding I called him Mr. from not knowing his name, as I may ſay, for her ladyſhip aſſured me ſhe ſhouldn't give tickets to none but quality,

that being the ſet ſhe thinks I ought to get in among; for as ſhe ſaid very properly to me, (ſays ſhe) My dear Mrs. Harden—you muſt know, ma'am, her ladyſhip has always been ſo kind as to call me her *dear* Mrs. Harden, ever ſince that little matter of friendſhip paſſed of Mr. Harden's lending her a few thouſands, juſt to keep her out of the King's Bench, as it were, which would have been ſuch a ſhocking place, you know, for a lady of quality; but I wouldn't wiſh to have that mentioned on no account, for fear ſhe ſhould think as I had boaſted on't; whereas every one knows it was a very great honour for Mr. Harden, who was only a linendraper, as I may ſay, though a wholeſale one, indeed, which you know, ma'am, is tantamount to merchant, to have a lady of quality come, and humble herſelf to him, as I may ſay, to aſk a favour. He indeed did not ſeem to think ſo much on't, but as I ſaid to him (ſays I), merciful gracious!—"

Here an introduction impeded the torrent of her loquacity; but it ſoon reſumed its courſe, with, "So as I was ſaying, her ladyſhip ſays to me, My *dear* Mrs. Harden (ſays ſhe), where's the uſe of your money,

if it doesn't make your way into high life? So Miſs needn't have been afeard of meeting with any body improper in my houſe, for there a'n't one of Mr. Harden's, or my own acquaintance, as I have given a ticket to; for as her ladyſhip ſaid (ſays ſhe), if you go for to mix your city correſpondents, and them there, with my friends, why you'll never get none of 'em to come near you again."

"Your new acquaintance will have ſomething to do to make you amends for thus diſobliging all your old friends for their ſakes," obſerved Mrs. Jones.

"Merciful gracious, ma'am! why the honour of their acquaintance makes amends enough of itſelf; beſides, I make no manner of doubt but there will be enough left of to night's good things, to give them a very ſmart hop next week, and mayhap that may bring poor dear Mr. Harden about again, for he haven't been much of his own man, never ſince the preparations of this here fête has been going on, as I may ſay."

"I think it would be worth while to bring Mr. Harden about again, indeed," ſaid Mrs. Jones, who ſeemed amuſed with this con-

verſation. Lady Belfont was, I believe, too much vexed to have been led in to abet Mrs. Harden's folly, by her preſence, to throw in a word, and I was ſo perplexed with the immovable ſtare of my propoſed partner, that I could only look down like a fool, and play with my fan.

" And perhaps," added Mrs. Jones, playfully, " Mr. Harden may be of opinion that a little patience would have ſaved much expenſe and trouble, for it is odds but all your own acquaintance may *become quality* before many years more paſs over their heads."

" Merciful gracious, ma'am! but you don't conſider what many years is; for as to becoming quality, to be ſure, I haven't been without thoughts of that myſelf, but I couldn't get Mr. Harden to make no ſtir about bringing up that there addreſs *, which he had juſt as good a right to as *Sir Simon* Plumb, as now is, the grocer, who was knighted of courſe, and that, you know, would have ſettled the matter at once; I ſhould have been my lady as well as the beſt on 'em: but there's no hammering a taſte

* Probably of congratulation on the failure of Peg Nicholſon.

for gentility into poor dear Mr. Harden's head, as you ſhall judge by this very affair here, ma'am. Would you believe as he would have been ſatisfied to take the London tavern for it? But as Lady Rachel ſaid to him very properly (ſays her ladyſhip), with what face in the world, do you think, I could go for to invite my friends to the London tavern? And as to Mr. Harden making theſe here difficulties, it can be nothing but out of pure ill nature, ſeeing as he doesn't mind the expenſe; for what can be ſo eaſy, ſays her ladyſhip (ſays ſhe), as for him and you to go to an *Ótudl* for a few nights, and give up your houſe to Mr. Wultchie and his people for the preparations? ſeeing as you have a houſe quite proper, with only the addition of a ball room from that there place at what d'ye call it, to fill up the yard, and ſo break a folding door out of the back parlour into it, and that will give a fine *ſuit* upon the ground floor, as you ſee, ma'am, and the ſupper tables in the three rooms above: and then, ſays her ladyſhip (ſays ſhe), by only taking down the beds, you'll have four card rooms in the two pair of ſtairs. To be ſure I was a little afear'd the quality midn't

like to go for to clamber up two pair of ſtairs for that; but, ſays her ladyſhip, depend upon't they won't mind where they go, ſo they get it: ſo of courſe I thought her ladyſhip muſt know beſt, being her own cronies, as I may ſay; only I know as at Briſtol we ſhouldn't have liked to have done no ſuch a thing: and by theſe here means, ma'am, we can accommodate, as her ladyſhip calls it, a matter of fourteen or fifteen hundred people, which is the feweſt her ladyſhip could undertake to invite, without diſobliging half her viſiting liſt. Well, I'll aſſure you, ma'am, notwithſtanding it was all made ſo eaſy to him, you'll never gueſs what a piece of work we had to make Mr. Harden ſenſible what purpoſe it would all anſwer; and at laſt I do verily believe it was only to get ſhut of the teaſing that he ſaid as I mid have it all my own way, for he ſwore, at the ſame time, that he wouldn't neither come, nor look near the houſe till it was all over; which was rather lucky, as I may ſay, ſeeing as he mid have forbid them to break through the roofs of the bedchambers into the *hattucks*, on account of the lowneſs of the ceilings—"

Here another introduction interrupted the

narrative; and by this time Mrs. Jones, I believe, had quite enough of it; but Lord Belfont had, to his infinite diverſion, come in for a ſhare, and was not willing to let it drop. "Upon my ſoul, I ſhould have thought Mr. Harden juſtifiable if he had been a little alarmed for the fate of his attics, or of his houſe indeed—for meddling with beams is a ſerious buſineſs."

"Merciful gracious! but they've never meddled with the beams at all, that's the beauty on't, only juſt opened up on all ſides of 'em, and twiſted 'em all about with lampoons of hartificial roſes and vines, and real grapes hanging to 'em."

"So that you have but to turn up your head, and they'll drop into your mouth. Well, that is the neweſt and moſt agreeable device," ſaid Lord Belfont, hardly able to contain himſelf.

"Lawk o'me, you make me proud indeed, Sir, for that thought was altogether my own. Mr. Wultchy wouldn't have gone for to venture upon it, as he ſaid, of his own head, on account of the expenſe: ſo I was ſorry as he ſhould think ſo mean of Mr. Harden's fortune; and when he ſaid it would

ſtand in a matter of five hundred pounds for the grapes alone, I ſaid as I didn't think that worth minding for once in a way; and if you'll pleaſe to walk up, and play a game at cards, I hope as you'll think it taſtey."

"I think, Madam, while you were about it, it's a pity Weltjie did not ſuggeſt pullies to hoiſt your particular friends up ſtairs over the heads of the crowd, for I ſee no other chance of ever arriving."

"He! he! he! that would have been a very good thought; but as to friends, lawk o'me, as I was a ſaying to theſe here ladies, I haven't hardly ſo much as an acquaintance in the houſe; and then to be ſure I didn't quite expect as quality would go for to mob it in that there faſhion, for I don't know how I ſhall ever get up ſtairs myſelf to carve at ſupper. But as I was a ſaying, Sir, the worſt on't will all be to come to morrow, for poor dear Mr. Harden was hugging himſelf, as he was a going to bed, while I was a dreſſing at the *ſtull*, that now he ſhould have nothing to do but to get into his own bed again to morrow night, and pay the bills, and have done with it; whereas you ſee, ma'am, it will take at leaſt another week to ſet all to

rights; ſo it will certainly be beſt, as I was a ſaying, to get him into good humour again, by giving his own friends a hop."

"I ſhould by all means approve of getting Mr. Harden into good humour again, at any rate," ſaid Mrs. Jones.

"And as ſome of our Briſtol neighbours are at Wapping juſt now, why to ſhow them all theſe here prettyneſſes, mid improve their taſte; for though we don't mind parting with our money of a pin, in Briſtol, merciful gracious! we could no more have gone for to have invented any thing like this here, than we could have flown."

Here a lady coming abruptly up to Lady Belfont, put a final ſtop to Mrs. Harden's oratory, by crying out, "Do, dear Lady Belfont, point out to me, if you can, the hottentot that Lady Rachel chooſes to patroniſe, that I may make my curtſey to her. I was told I couldn't miſtake her, but I've hunted about in vain, and the Ducheſs of Dovedale is waiting to take me home with her to ſupper; and I ſhall loſe all the merit of having come at all, if I go away without doing the civil thing."

"The civil thing!" repeated Jem Jeſſop,

who had juſt worked his way through the crowd; "did I ever expect to hear ſuch an antiquated phraſe from the lips of Lady Blackgrove? What can tempt you to derogate thus from all received ideas?"

"Dear Jem, don't miſtake me, I had not the leaſt view to the hottentot in my civilities; for one knows exactly how to treat theſe ſort of people; one's name in the newſpaper, as having been at their houſe, is enough for them; but Lady Rachel is ſo confoundedly *vieille cour* herſelf, that I ſhould get into the devil of a ſcrape with her if I omitted this little bit of etiquette; and you know it isn't ſafe to diſoblige a *ſtriking* beauty*. Ha! ha! ha!"

Jem's reply, and the converſation that followed, which I did not hear, as they moved off together, ſaved Lady Belfont from the awkwardneſs of returning an anſwer to the unfortunate query, which had ſo effectually

* Alluding, probably, to the well known bon mot of Lord Cheſterfield, who, upon being told that a very handſome woman had been provoked to give her antagoniſt, in a diſpute at cards, a box in the ear, replied, 'I always conſidered her as a *ſtriking* beauty.'

confounded Mrs. Harden, that ſhe had taken advantage of the crowd to withdraw from us.

" I am very glad you were ſpared from increaſing poor Mrs. Harden's mortification, by Lady Blackgrove's not recollecting to wait for an anſwer," ſaid Mrs. Jones to Lady Belfont.

" Upon my word, I do not know that I ſhould have been ſo good natured as to wiſh to ſoften the impreſſion of a leſſon that might make Mrs. Harden ſenſible of the perfect contempt with which the higher ranks treat this mode of bribing them, by dint of extravagant magnificence, to mix with their inferiours; for I find Mrs. Harden by no means ſtands alone upon this ground; but I was ſo confounded at Lady Blackgrove's ſudden recognition, after having ſat next me for half an hour at Mrs Burford's, without appearing to have the ſmalleſt recollection of my perſon or features, that I was at a loſs in what manner to reply."

" You will ſoon be accuſtomed to this," ſaid Mrs. Jones; " for I am told there is not now the ſmalleſt reaſon to ſuppoſe that

your being treated with friendly intimacy to night, ſhould entitle you to a curtſey from the ſame perſon to morrow."

"I have been made aware of that," replied Lady Belfont, "by the diſtreſs of more than one unreturned curtſey ſince my arrival, and am teaching myſelf to withhold my civilities, till ſome previous indication leads me to think they will be taken notice of. A few years, I perceive, have made a rapid progreſs in high breeding."

Lord Belfont, who had been engaged in a whiſpering converſation, turned ſuddenly towards me, and ſaid, "Did you refuſe to dance, Louiſa, with that young man, whoſe glaſs is juſt now directed at you?"

"I certainly did."

"Do you know it is Lord Edward Highmore?"

"I did not know it at the time I refuſed him; but it would have made no difference if I had."

"Have you ſuch an inſuperable objection to dancing?"

"Not at all, my lord; my inſuperable objection is to impertinence."

"I did not know he had ſpoken to you."

"Words are not always requiſite to convey that idea. I conceive his perſeverance in ſtaring at me, in defiance of my confuſion and diſtreſs, which cannot have eſcaped his notice, will bear no other tranſlation."

"You really, child, expoſe your ignorance to a degree that would make me aſhamed to have you overheard. Do you know that Lord Edward Highmore's notice, if properly cultivated, would have ſtamped you the reigning beauty of the ſeaſon? Sir Simon Swinnington has juſt been telling me, that Lord Edward had actually put himſelf forward to dance with you; but you ſeemed ſo little ſenſible of the compliment, that he is inclined to believe you next thing to an ideot, unleſs your being new to the London world may perchance make you ignorant of who he is; and I am deſired by Sir Simon to inform you."

"And pray, my lord, what degree of *cultivation* would his notice require, to raiſe me to the flattering diſtinction you mention?"

"Why, if he had been ſufficiently captivated with your converſation in the dance, to ſit down by you afterwards, and take care of you at ſupper—"

"My *converſation* in the dance? you joke; I don't talk whilſt I'm dancing."

"I fear Miſs Riverſdale pays but little attention to what's going on," interrupted Mrs. Jones, "or ſhe would not have laid herſelf open to this freſh imputation of ignorance, quite as ſtriking as the firſt. Do you not obſerve that they *converſe* it up, and *dance* it down?—that's the true ſtyle."

I certainly had not been obſervant either of this, or the perfect independence that ſeemed to reign throughout the dance; for as the whole ſet were entirely inattentive to the couple coming down, ſo the couple coming down were equally careleſs of the ſet, and appeared quite ſatisfied to courſe backwards and forwards, and foot it, and twirl round, and throw themſelves into attitudes, without the leaſt attempt at figure of any ſort.

"I now think myſelf doubly fortunate in my refuſal," I ſaid; "for inſtead of captivating Lord Edward's attention, I ſhould have forfeited it paſt redemption, by the vulgarity with which I am apt to mind what I am about."

"You and Mrs. Jones are pleaſed to be

witty," faid Lord Belfont; "but I wiſh you would let me go and tell Sir Simon that you will dance with Lord Edward."

"You are not ſerious in wiſhing it, my lord?"

"I am, upon my ſoul; I ſhould like to ſee the effect of ſuch an artleſs, elegant, ſenſible creature, taking the lead in the firſt world."

"I ſhould forfeit all pretenſions to the ſenſe your partiality allows me, my lord, were I to let myſelf be flattered into the attempt."

"No *attempt* is requiſite. Lord Edward Highmore's ſuffrage, evinced in a way ſo unqueſtionable as his moving a ſtep at a ball, will inſtantly ſtamp you the admiration of all the men, and the envy and model of all the women."

A pretty conſiderable buſtle now occurred, from a party forcing their way forward, without the leaſt regard to the inconvenience they occaſioned; and my attention was caught by an extremely well dreſſed, faſhionable looking, highly rouged, ugly young woman, ſurrounded by a cluſter of men, that ſeemed vying for her notice.

As I could not ſuppoſe the attraction to be in her perſon, I concluded her to be wife o ſome man high in office;—but Lady Belont explained it.

" Here comes the proof of Lord Belfont's ſſertion," ſaid ſhe, " and the triumph of rofligacy. Lord Edward Highmore laid a et of a thouſand pounds, that he would aiſe to celebrity, by his attentions, the laineſt and ſillieſt woman that could be xed upon. This young woman was the bject ſelected by his opponent. He deoted three weeks to the purſuit; in which ort time he has completed her initiation into very kind of extravagant folly—ruined her putation, and conſtituted her *ſovereign rbitreſs of ton and faſhion*. It was neceſry to let ſome months elapſe ſince his deliction of her, to determine the wager, hich, I have juſt been informed, was paid aſt week; and he is now beginning to whiſer it about as a good joke; but it is not et enough known to deſtroy her conſeuence; caps and bonnets ſtill are recomended by her name. But, alas! the day at hand that will devote her to worſe than er original inſignificance."

I really now looked upon Lord Edward with horrour.

"What a plentiful ſtore of pity muſt Lady Belfont be poſſeſſed of, to beſtow it upon ſuch a fool!" cried Lord Belfont.

"The folly is chargeable upon him, ſurely, contended Mrs. Jones.

"Her folly is chargeable upon nature," Lord Belfont retorted; "he only took advantage of it."

But ſurely, my dear brother, the injury is in making folly conſpicuous, and conſtituting the plea of precedent for other fools to take ſhelter under: folly, ſuffered to remain in the back ground, may glide through life innocuous—without *eſſential* detriment, at leaſt, either to the poſſeſſor or the world.

"Since Louiſa will not dance," ſaid Lord Belfont, "I think we had beſt make our way to the card rooms; her initiation will not be complete without that."

The alarming crowd upon the ſtaircaſe made us ſhrink from the attempt; but Lord Belfont laughed at our fears, and inſiſted upon our puſhing forward. The attempt, however, proved more arduous than he had expected, and muſt, I believe, have been re-

linquiſhed, but for the encouraging aſſiſtance offered by Lady Jane, who ſeems to be the Lady Jane par excellence, for I have not yet heard her ſirname. She ſaid, laughing, to Lord Belfont, "I hope you don't mean to give out; keep cloſe to me with your party, and I'll engage to make way for you; you are too civil by half:" and in fact ſhe kimboed her arms, and by dint of elbows got on in a manner that would certainly not have occurred to a perſon leſs converſant in the ways of the world.

As our progreſs was, however, very ſlow, Lady Jane expreſſed her wonder, that this dead ſtand upon the ſtaircaſe ſhould have taken place at ſo early an hour!" Somebody replied, "that the alarm of ſupper had ſpread, from ſeeing one of the doors open for the ſervants to carry in ſomething preparatory, and ſeveral people had forced their way in after them, and actually placed themſelves at table, and were now locked in by Weltjie, who ſaw no other means of preventing the whole ſupper from being carried off by ſtorm, before it was even completed."

"What nonſenſe!" exclaimed Lady

Jane, "it is not two yet; there has hardly been time to ſettle one's dinner."

"Probably the French cuſtom is obtaining, of not dining when one means to ſup," ſaid Lady Belfont; "nothing ſhort of being abſolutely famiſhed can account for proceedings ſo violent as this."

"O Lord, yes," returned Lady Jane, laughing, "the deſire of having the choice of places and tables, is quite ſufficient. I ſhould probably have been among the firſt myſelf, becauſe one's never ſure there will be accommodation for all, you know; and it's a horrid thing to come ſecond, and feed like the pigs in other people's dirt.—I can't imagine," ſhe added, "why this fooliſh woman, while ſhe was about it, didn't give a maſquerade."

"It appears to me, as if the preeminence of maſquerades was quite ſuperſeded," Mrs. Jones obſerved.

"How do you mean?" cried Lady Jane; "it's the moſt delightful ſqueeze of all!"

"I think we ſeem to do vaſtly well in that reſpect, without it," returned Mrs. Jones; "and I always underſtood, the pe-

culiar advantage of a masquerade, as arising from the *freedom of speech*, and *choice of a dress*, at other times inadmissible; but now, that any dress is chosen, and any thing is said without such adventitious aid, I really can see no use in them at all."

"And perhaps you think the very mask may find its way into the world, independently of such a sanction," added Lord Belfont, looking at a lady, whom chance had at that moment brought us very near, and whose face was bedaubed so much beyond any attempt at imitating nature, that it scarcely appeared human; and she actually made me start.

"Can't you get on, Lady Jane?" cried Lord Edward Highmore, who had followed us.

"Quiz my capabilities!" exclaimed his companion, "if I'm not pinioned like a *crapaudine* *; I cannot exist above a minute longer—I shall faint! By all that's fashionable, I shall! I'm persuaded my eyes have lost their brilliancy already!"

* A French mode of broiling pigeons.

"Gad rat it! you are in a ſcrape, Swinney," cried Lord Edward; and, moreover, the beſt half of the rouge off your left cheek is at this moment enlivening the tips of Lady Langden's feathers—"

"Condenſe my calves! if this isn't altogether too much. It's quite carnivorous in you, Highmore, to be ſo cruel as to tell one on't—in this ſituation, too, where there's no redreſs."

"Gad a mercy! I've a thought will ſave you;" and then Lord Edward exclaimed, with a voice of affected terrour, "Don't you perceive the ſtaircaſe giving way? Loſt! Swinney, the ſtep is quite looſe under my foot!"

This proved effectual indeed. With wild ſcreams the crowd that had aſſailed the ſupper-room door now made their way up to the ſecond ſtory, and we ſoon had the ſtaircaſe wholly to ourſelves. Lady Jane, with loud laughter, complimented Lord Edward upon the brilliancy of the invention. "I was determined," ſaid he, "to reſcue Swinney; not a hair of your eyebrow ſhall be hurt, my good fellow, while I can ſave you. He's

much too good game not to be preſerved, isn't he Lady Jane?" turning to her, in a whiſper.

"By all that's clever! I was diſhed! if it hadn't been for you, Highmore—vilify my veracity! if I wasn't. Do you think I could find my way into Mrs. Harden's dreſſing room, to recover from the depredations of thoſe pityleſs feathers? Stupify me! if I can bear the thought of being looked at as I am."

"I thought, Swinney, you always carried your rouge box and pocket glaſs about you, to obviate any misfortune of this kind?"

"By all that's faſhionable! I always do; but then one might get quizzed by uſing them in public, you know, and I haven't nerves to ſtand quizzing; I haven't upon my reputation!"

This ridiculous being was the identical Sir Simon Swinningford whom Lord Edward had deputed the herald of his conſequence to Lord Belfont, when I had declined dancing—and theſe are young Engliſhmen of faſhion, Henry.

We had no farther difficulty to make our way into a card room, ſeparated from the

left, when the ſcene exhibited at the faro table ſoon drew off my attention from the wonders of Mrs. Harden's grapes, feſtoons, &c.

"I did not expect that Mrs. Harden could already have attained this ſummit of faſhionable glory," ſaid Mrs. Jones. "I had underſtood there was a combination againſt all interloping banks."

"So there is," replied Lord Belfont; "but this is Lady Rachel's own concern, and ſent here for the night."

The banker, and his attendant croupiers, were engaged in a diſpute, as we entered, with a young, pretty woman, who was ſeated at the table. "I am perfectly certain, madam, that there were but five guineas upon that card when you made the paroli," ſaid the croupier.

"You ſee there are ten now, Sir," ſhe replied, coolly, putting her card forward for payment.

"But how they came there, madam, is the queſtion," ſaid the banker.

"That was your look out," ſhe anſwered; "I claim payment of my thirty guineas."

I expected that her perfect compoſure would have made the man aſhamed of the meaning that his words ſeemed to convey; but he calmly ſaid, "Very true, madam, the look out of the croupiers, at leaſt, if not mine, I cannot have my eyes every where: a little more watchfulneſs, gentlemen, if you pleaſe, to the croupiers, or the bank muſt be ruined;" and he paid the money.

"How much more mildneſs ſhe muſt poſſeſs than her countenance beſpeaks!" I obſerved to Lady Belfont, "to let ſuch an affront paſs;—for really what he ſaid might almoſt have been conſtrued into a ſuſpicion of her having ſlipped more money upon the card unfairly."

Lord Edward Highmore, whom I had not perceived to be juſt at my elbow, burſt into a loud laugh, exclaiming, before Lady Belfont could anſwer: "Gad rat it! it's too much!—quite too much!—the *almoſt* will poſitively ſuffocate me.—Pray, ma'am, where may you come from, never to have heard of that injured fair before?"

I was too much offended with his ill breeding to give any anſwer. A lady at the table looked round to Lord Edward, and

ſaid, "If you wiſh to punt I'll make room; or give me a rouleau, and I'll manage it for you; I'm in luck to night."

"No, crucify Faro!" returned Lord Edward, "I've no patience for it, it keeps one too long in ſuſpenſe: *rouge* and *noir* for me, a man may be made or marred at it in five minutes. I like viciſſitude, it prevents the current of life from ſtagnating."

"Petrify my plauſibility! if that isn't indefinitely what I think," exclaimed Sir Simon, who had juſt rejoined his friend, with his rouge repaired. "Cataſtrophe is your only!—I'm devoted to cataſtrophe."

Mrs. Jones obſerved, in a whiſper, "Slipſcpiſm is not confined to females, now-a-days, I perceive."

"Don't miſtake that for unintentional, however," ſaid Lord Belfont. "Swinningford's folly in dreſs and manners finds ſo many imitators, that he is now trying his influence upon language, as well by introducing a high ſounding word, where it conveys no ſort of meaning, as by the novelty of his ſubſtitutes for oaths."

"I give him credit for his invention in point of ſwearing," ſaid Lord Edward; "it's

mortal good. I ſhould be apt to adopt it, but that I ſcorn to imitate any man. Oaths are unqueſtionably requiſite to the energy of converſation. Gad rat it! I ſhould never know how to get on without: but ſtill, as Swinney ſays, a good ſubſtitute anſwers all the purpoſe, and marks the diſtinction between a gentleman and his groom."

"I admit the validity of the reaſon," ſaid Mrs. Jones, archly; "one is glad to find ſomething to diſtinguiſh them by. Now the Ducheſs of Daſher is not reſtrained by any ſuch ariſtocratic conſideration, for I've heard her rap out oaths that might have ſtaggered her groom."

"That's habit," replied Lord Edward—"I've often told her I thought it indelicate, and propoſed Swinney's example to her; it affords ſuch free ſcope to imagination, that ſhe might be very conſpicuous in it."

"Perplex my pedigree! I ſhould be eclipſed—demonſtratively eclipſed," cried Sir Simon.

Mrs. Jones pointed out a remarkably mean looking man, at the farther part of the table, who was placed next to Lady Rachel, and receiving inſtructions from her in the

game; and whoſe cards loſt as faſt as he put money on them.

"That's Mackay, the broker's ſon," ſaid Lord Belfont.

"One of Mrs. Harden's city friends, admitted as an exception?"

"Not at all; in the great world, under Lady Rachel's immediate patronage, a full purſe, and the proper application of that little cabaliſtic word, *ſept-le-va*, gains him admittance every where."

At this moment a lady roſe from the table, with an exclamation of, "Curſe little figure!" ſo violent as to make ſome of us ſtart. "Such a diabolical run!" continued ſhe; "I have loſt upwards of two hundred pounds in ten minutes," tearing the cards, and ſcattering them in a phrenzy.

Mrs. Jones and I were perfectly thunderſtruck, when our attention was ſuddenly turned to the appearance of another extraordinary buſtle. An agitated whiſper was circulated among the byſtanders, which was caught by one or two of the punters, who earneſtly interfered, by inſiſting that the deal ſhould be finiſhed before the communication was made.

"What may this be?" I asked Lady Belfont?

"Lord Bloomfield is at the point of death," said Lady Belfont, "and they wish to prevent Mr. Blackney's being told of it, on account of interrupting the deal."

"Is Mr. Blackney the banker?"

"Not the banker, only dealer of the cards, for which he receives five guineas per hour," Lord Belfont said.

"And what has he to do with Lord Bloomfield?"

"Only his brother."

"Nay, now indeed, my lord, you are putting my credulity to the proof. A gentleman! and paid for his time by the hour? Impossible!"

Lord Belfont laughed, and repeated the assertion. Mrs. Jones was as much surprised as I was. This was new to her, who had been out of London three or four years.

The deal being ended, the news of Lord Bloomfield's danger was imparted to Mr. Blackney, who immediately requested Lady Rachel Lyme to set him at liberty.

"Lord! I never knew any thing so disagreeable in my life," cried Lady Rachel;

" I don't know who in the world to ſubſtitute in your place; I ſuppoſe half an hour can't make much difference, till I can find ſomebody—"

" It will not admit of a moment's delay," he anſwered.

" Curſe this affectation of ſentiment!" retorted Lady Rachel; " I'm ſure you never pretended to care ſixpence for him before; and now, if you break me up, all the punters will fly off to Mrs. Burford's, and we ſhall loſe the benefit of the night's ſitting."

" There is no affectation in it, upon my ſoul! You know Bloomfield has a good deal in his own power; and this apparent wiſh for reconciliation, in ſending for me, may portend me a ſhare of it."

" Well, I allow that's unanſwerable; but it's confounded unlucky, that, after lingering ſo long, he ſhould juſt make his exit ſo malapropos for me: I inſiſt, however, upon your finding a ſubſtitute, that will not take you ten minutes."

" Here's Jenkyns, ready found," ſaid he.

A demur of a minute enſued: after which Lady Rachel ſaid, " No, I'm determined I'll deal myſelf. No offence to you," added

ſhe, ſmiling, to Mr. Jenkyns; "but you know I'm ſuperſtitious; and I dreamed laſt night that Jenkyns broke the bank."

And accordingly ſhe took the dealer's place, without ſeeming to cauſe the leaſt ſurpriſe to any, but ſome of our party.

"Gad rat it! I give her credit for that," cried Lord Edward. "You know, Swinney, Jenkyns dealt one night, and held the cards in ſuch a doubtful manner, there was no aſcertaining whether he drew from the top or the bottom, ſo we all gave out; though, as ſeveral of us are ſharers, none cared to ſpeak; becauſe he's ſuch a rare pigeon when he ſits down to punt, he loſes his temper ſo conſumedly."

"I'll give you ſome advantage from my dream, however, Jenkyns," reſumed Lady Rachel; "you ſhall punt if you've a mind."

"Confound my capacity! if that isn't admirable again," exclaimed Sir Simon.

"I've loſt every farthing I had about me, at rouge et noir," ſaid Jenkyns.

"The more reaſon for your trying to recover it here," replied Lady Rachel. "Make me your private banker, and draw freely; your word will do with me for a thouſand."

"Do you twig Swinney?" ſaid Lord Edward. "Devil curſe me, if ever I ſaw any thing better done."

"Incommenſurately ſuperlative! By all that's faſhionable, ſhe's up to any thing."

Jenkyns ſat down—with what ſucceſs may be eaſily gueſſed; but we did not ſtay to inquire.

"And is this woman really countenanced by people of character?" ſaid Mrs. Jones.

"Not only countenanced, but conſidered," replied Lord Belfont, "the *very beſt creature in the world; ſo exceſſively good humoured, and ſo much ſenſibility!* I heard her panegyric in theſe very words, not an hour ago."

"It would be a mortal good quiz," ſaid Lord Edward, "to awaken her ſenſibility to Lady Plymore's ſituation at this moment; her boſom friend, you know."

"Do, God bleſs you, do," ſaid Lord Belfont, "I'll aſſiſt you."

Lady Belfont attempted to interpoſe, in vain, his lordſhip was too elate with the triumphs of the night; for, beſide all that I have related, he had indulged himſelf in pointing out to me, whether juſtly or not I

cannot ſay, all the private connections he had before undertaken for. "No, no," he cried, "let's follow it up, Louiſa ſhall ſee all the humours on't, I'm determined."

And he followed Lord Edward round the table, till they got cloſe to Lady Rachel.

"Poor Lady Plymore! Gad rat it! I quite grieve for her," began Lord Edward.

"What of her?" ſaid Lady Rachel, without raiſing her eyes, or ſtaying for the anſwer. "Seven loſes—figure wins."

"Ay, it's a ſad ſtroke, indeed," cried Lord Belfont.

"And nine wins—the half for the banker," continued Lady Rachel: and while the croupiers were gathering the money, "For mercy's ſake, what has happened to her? You know ſhe's my moſt intimate friend."

"Yes, that makes one ſo unwilling to alarm you," rejoined Lord Edward; "but really her ſituation is ſo critical—"

"How can you be ſo barbarous? You terrify me to death. Eight loſes—five wins—No, no, Lady Lightfoot, that won't do—the *ſept-le-va* ſhould be off."

"It was transferred from the ten," ſaid Lady Lightfoot.

"The ten loſt but a moment ago—ſee here—" turning back ſome of the cards.

"Devil take her ſharpneſs!" muttered Lady Lightfoot; "if her friend was dead, 'twould make no difference."

"Well, Lord Edward?"—ſaid Lady Rachel.

"Why the fact is, that her daughter has contrived to elope with the groom at laſt—this very morning; and the poor woman has been in fits ever ſince, which are likely to prove fatal."

"Good God of Heaven! You rack my nerves to that degree—figure loſes—little figure wins—ſhe will never ſurvive the ſtroke!"

"I ſuppoſe not," ſaid Lord Belfont, "for it has thrown the gout into her ſtomach; and I hear Doctor Heberden doubts her getting over the night."

"Can any thing be ſo cruel, as telling me this in this ſudden manner! without the leaſt preparation! and at a moment when it is ſo impoſſible for me to get to her!—Do, for mercy's ſake, give me ſome aromatic vinegar, ſome of you! I'm ſo agitated, I can ſcarce ſeparate the cards. Eight loſes—ſeven wins—"

"How ſavage! how unfeeling! to alarm her in this dreadful manner," was muttered round the table; "ſhe'll never be able to go on."

The inſtant the deal was ended, ſhe called for the groom of the chambers, and ordered him to find ſomebody immediately to ſend to Lady Plymore's, to inquire whether ſhe were ſtill alive. "Let them be quick," ſhe added, "for I ſhall ſcarcely exiſt myſelf till I get the anſwer."

And then—ſhe began a freſh deal.

"There! Finis coronat opus!" exclaimed Lord Belfont, as he came back to us.

I really had ſeen quite enough, and was very earneſt that we might get away before ſupper, as both Mrs. Jones and Lady Belfont appeared as tired as myſelf.

We did ſo.—And now, my deareſt brother, will you give me credit for ſome command over myſelf, in having been able to narrate the occurrences of the evening ſo ſuccinctly, when I inform you, that it concluded with our finding Mr. Stanville in attendance upon Mrs. Blandford, who was waiting for her carriage in an outer room?—

They both teſtified ſurpriſe to ſee our

party: Lady Belfont, not leſs, to find Mrs. Blandford was in town. "Buſineſs had called her up, and engroſſed her time," ſhe ſaid. Mutual civilities paſſed—we were introduced to each other. Mr. Stanville appeared embarraſſed, and ſcarcely ſpoke.

I do not find myſelf equal to giving an opinion of her yet—my mind is not at eaſe.

17*th June.*—I am glad—very glad, that I did not proceed to give you my opinion of Mrs. Blandford, on Friday, my dear brother. I ſhould not have done her juſtice: and how mean! how narrow minded! how envious ſhould I have appeared! She dined here yeſterday, and ſoon compelled me to admit her to be all that you, Lady Belfont, and Mr. Stanville think her; eminently accompliſhed, agreeable, ſenſible, unaffuming; the moſt animated expreſſion of countenance.—All this I ſee, and acknowledge. She put herſelf forward to me, too, in a very marked, obliging manner.—I know not how it was—I wanted courage to meet her advances—

I am not, I truſt, by nature ungrateful,

but I ſhrunk into my own inſignificance. A woman of underſtanding ſo very ſuperiour, however ſhe may veil it with modeſty, muſt hold others cheap. I never felt ſo completely ſilly—ſo utterly at a loſs. Mrs. Blandford was all condeſcenſion, and ſeemed determined to conquer my embarraſſment; but, accuſtomed to converſation ſo brilliant, ſo animated, as that of Mr. Stanville, I am convinced ſhe muſt think me a fool. She ſpoke to me of you, too—had been ſtruck with your manner, and the lively, peculiar turn of your obſervations. Mr. Stanville joined in your praiſe—even this could not ſet me at eaſe.

Lady Belfont looked at me with aſtoniſhment.

Lady Frances Ruthen was convinced I muſt be ill. Had I the head-ach?—eaten ſomething that had diſagreed with me, perhaps?—or was I nervous? She had never ſeen me ſo low before, and it made her wretched; ſhe proteſted ſhe could not touch another morſel, if I continued to look ſo.

Nothing but a ſtrong ſenſe of how much I ſhould expoſe myſelf, ſaved me from tears of vexation at her officious kindneſs.

Mr. Stanville ſat next to Mrs. Blandford at table; I was oppoſite: ſome whiſpering converſation paſſed between them, of which I am certain I was the object. His eyes turned upon me, with an expreſſion, bordering, I thought, upon compaſſion. I judged he was endeavouring to apologiſe for the unaccountable appearance I made—I felt humbled to the duſt, and was ready to ſink. Can you, Henry?—Can any mortal tell me why?

Lady Frances repeated her perſecution, "You are not well, my lovely Miſs Riverſdale! I cannot be miſtaken in it—let me attend you into the next room."

I declined the offer, with, I fear, a tone of pettiſhneſs; for Lady Belfont now interpoſed, and kindly ſaid, "Take a little madeira, Louiſa, and let me entreat you to bear up againſt this anxiety: had I been aware your diſappointment of a letter from Madame de Sainval had ſunk ſo deep, I ſhould have made a point of arguing you into a little more philoſophy this morning."

"Good Heaven!" exclaimed the participating Lady Frances, "is Louiſa upon the rack of friendſhip? I ſhould ſink under the dreadful anxiety; and ſuch an enchanting,

fascinating little angel as Madame de Sainval is! I don't think I ever was so captivated at first sight."

"Certainly not above fifty times before," said Lord Belfont, who has not a more favourite theme than his sister's susceptibilities, which she never fails to defend with an earnestness that proved highly serviceable to me in the present instance, as it withdrew all attention from me, and gave me time to recover.

I had, indeed, been excessively disappointed in the morning, at the want of a letter from my friend, whose silence of three weeks is really alarming; still I do not pretend to attribute my folly altogether to *that*; though I certainly felt relieved by having any motive assigned, and very grateful to Lady Belfont for the suggestion; indeed not without some hope that she herself believed the cause to be what she said;—and am I then willing to shrink from Lady Belfont's investigation? Alas, my brother! I begin to think meanly of myself;—is it not precisely to her that I ought to fly for support? Who so judicious? so kindhearted? so calculated to restore me to reason and peace? Yet tho

ſingle circumſtance of her being his ſiſter ſeems to check all poſſibility of diſcloſure.—Were ſhe any thing elſe, I ſhould not heſitate to confeſs my folly—my weakneſs; but as it is—break, wayward heart! there is no reſource left.

* * * * *

When we retired to coffee, Lady Belfont ſat down to her frame, and called for my aſſiſtance; Mrs. Blandford likewiſe offered hers, and we all three ſat to work.

Fortunately, Lady Frances was extremely intereſted in the concluſion of a novel, with which ſhe retired into the dreſſing room; and Lady Belfont inſtantly reſumed the ſubject of Madame de Sainval, and gave me praiſes ſo much beyond my due, for having been the happy means of bringing about the reconciliation, that I ſhould have felt called upon to diſclaim them, but for the conſciouſneſs how much I required to be raiſed in Mrs. Blandford's opinion, and I let them paſs with a quietneſs, which I now again fear might be conſtrued into conceit.

Mrs. Blandford, however, joined profuſely in the commendations, and encouragingly obſerved, how "a good heart and ſound

judgment, urged into action by friendly zeal, might occasionally supply the want of experience—what knowledge of the world could have prompted a better mode of turning Monsieur de Sainval's unguarded declaration to advantage, than solicitude for her friend instinctively suggested to Miss Riversdale?"

"The happy result may, however, have arisen quite as much from the unexpected discovery of Madame de Sainval's attachment to him, in the situation she was thrown into by the false report of the duel," I observed.

"Still," replied Mrs. Blandford, "you paved the way for giving that impression its full effect, and now enjoy the very peculiar satisfaction of reflecting that your idea is so interwoven with the happiness of your two friends, that the more they love each other, the more you are entwined round the hearts of both; for I cannot suppose you insensible to the gratification arising from the consciousness of having converted Monsieur de Sainval's too tender admiration into virtuous friendship, founded in the most merited esteem."

All that Lady Frances Ruthen had said,

ruſhed full upon my mind, and I would have given the world to have known accurately Mrs. Blandford's idea of the degree of friendſhip admiſſible in parties ſo ſituated; but my courage failed me; I could not even truſt myſelf to ſpeak upon the ſubject, leſt I might have incurred the ſuſpicion of glancing at herſelf and Mr. Stanville.

The gentlemen came up without Mr. Stanville. "What's become of Charles?" ſaid Lady Belfont. "I thought to have found him here," replied Lord Belfont; "he followed you almoſt immediately when you left the room." Mrs. Blandford ſmiled. Conſcious that I *felt* diſappointed, I concluded I *looked ſo*, and conſtrued it into a ſmile of triumph. "Surely generoſity, however, will not be added to the liſt of her perfections," I thought.

In five minutes Mr. Stanville appeared, with a letter in his hand. "How truly happy am I," he cried, "to bring relief to Miſs Riverſdale's mind!" and he preſented me with a letter from Madame de Sainval, which had lain ſome days at the ſecretary of ſtate's office, from an awkwardneſs in the direction. The poſſibility of ſuch a circum-

ſtance had occurred to Mr. Stanville, and he had gone down himſelf to make the inquiry.

Surpriſe—pleaſure—ſhame . . . .

N. B. *The ſheet ends with theſe words, and the following ſheet, and perhaps more than one, is miſſing; for the next that ſeems to come in, according to the order of time, is not numbered, and begins abruptly, in the middle of a converſation between Miſs Riverſdale and Lady Belfont.*

——— "If I have ſucceeded, my deareſt child, in convincing you that I can lay aſide the ſiſter, and conſider the circumſtance as I would do, if wholly unconnected with Charles, and your happineſs my ſole object, will you now prove it to me, by placing confidence ſufficient in my advice, to abide by it, however painful the ſtruggle to which it may condemn you?"

"I truſt I ſhall not want firmneſs to act

up to what Lady Belfont may think it neceſſary to dictate."

"I have undertaken an arduous taſk, Louiſa; but your peace of mind is of too much moment to me, to ſhrink from it, though a decreaſe in your affection for me ſhould, even for a time, be the reſult."

"Indeed—indeed madam, you do me injuſtice by ſuch a ſuppoſition;" and I fell upon her neck in tears: "never did you give me a more unequivocal proof of your regard, than in this painful inſtance; and never was my heart more ſenſible of it—but I am ſo humbled—and ſo wretched, I ſcarce know what I ſay."

"Wretched, I too well ſee you are; but why humbled, my Louiſa? Surely I may, with the utmoſt impartiality ſay, that Charles juſtifies the preference your feeling heart grants him, by every quality that can or may command admiration and eſteem, and the impreſſion you have evidently made upon him—"

"The impreſſion! I — O Lady Belfont!—"

"What may this ſurpriſe mean, Louiſa?

Surely you are not to learn the ſtate of my unhappy brother's mind, and the ſtruggles by which he has been agitated ever ſince his acquaintance with you!"

"I will not deny that I have at times flattered myſelf—that is, I mean, imagined I perceived marks of predilection—but to what extent—or how combated, and why—I have never received the lightest hint."

"Now, indeed, you aſtoniſh me; I could not have conceived his ſelf-command to have gone ſo far—" and ſhe paused.

"Lady Frances Ruthen, indeed—hinted at an engagement—with Mrs. Blandford," I heſitatingly ſaid.

"Mrs. Blandford! Of all Lady Frances's whims, this is ſurely the moſt extraordinary. Mrs. Blandford is, I believe indeed, more entirely in his confidence than any other perſon whatever; and is well entitled to it. She was educated with her huſband, and from the hour of their marriage conſidered and treated as the brother of both; and at one moment of unfounded jealouſy on Mr. Blandford's part, Charles had the good fortune to be able to undeceive him, and place

Mrs. Blandford's virtues in a light ſo conſpicuous, that he increaſed the gratitude of both; and from that time their intercourſe became ſo confidential, they ſeemed to have but one ſoul among them."

"Still Mrs. Blandford's friendſhip for him had been ſuch as to alarm her huſband."

"Not for *him*; he was not the object of jealouſy, but the allayer of it."

"What eminent control over herſelf does Mrs. Blandford add to all her other virtues!"

"Do you mean that it required great command of herſelf not to fall in love with Charles, while ſhe was paſſionately attached to her own huſband? Ah, my poor Louiſa! irreſiſtible indeed you muſt deem him!"

I felt myſelf turn ſcarlet, with the conſciouſneſs of what my obſervation betrayed: my confuſion was ſo great, that Lady Belſont ſeemed hurt to have occaſioned it, and endeavoured to relieve it in the moſt delicate manner, by recurring to what Mrs. Blandford has imparted relative to Mr. Stanville's ſituation—and after all, it amounts to no more than that *there is a tie* which muſt

preclude Louiſa—but of what nature, Mrs. Blandford did not think herſelf at liberty to betray to Lady Belfont.

What ſtrange myſtery hangs over it! and how could a man of his ſenſe—worth—delicacy, involve himſelf in a manner which thus ſhuns the light?

I ventured to make this obſervation to Lady Belfont, almoſt-wiſhing her to concur, in affixing blame, that might aſſiſt me to ſubdue the impreſſion which it ſeems I now even *betray to byſtanders*. Time, indeed, that I ſhould flee! which was in fact the propoſal to which this converſation ultimately tended; ſoftened, however, by all that friendſhip could ſuggeſt, to ſave me from the humiliation of underſtanding it to be for my own ſake. It originated, ſhe ſaid, in her knowledge of the ſevere conflicts to which Mr. Stanville is a prey; the avowed neceſſity of his going abroad, and the impoſſibility to determine upon doing ſo whilſt I remain in London. More than once has the day been fixed, and orders for the neceſſary preparations given; and when the travelling carriage has come to the door, he has not

had the reſolution to ſtep into it, and ſent it away.

Shall I own to you, my deareſt friend, that I found myſelf inexpreſſibly ſoothed—at what?—to know myſelf to be the cauſe of diſtreſs to a man for whoſe happineſs I would readily lay down my life? Strange inconſiſtency! Ungenerous!—ſelfiſh!—Are theſe the genuine emanations of a heart which, in my vain boaſtings, I have dared to pronounce good? Alas, what a detector of evil propenſities is—Love—ſince I muſt at length bring myſelf to avow its dreaded influence. Did Yorick ſay it was the ſource of benevolent ſenſibility? *Fortunate love* he muſt have meant then, if he were an accurate inveſtigator; for in me it has only brought to light, envy—meanneſs—cruelty.—Ah, my brother, how juſtly did I deprecate the tyranny you had decorated with ſuch glowing colours!

One good propenſity, however, I truſt, will remain; and that is, the wiſh to conquer my faults as I diſcover them: I will labour to ſubdue all theſe newly awakened littleneſſes.

I have entirely acquieſced in the idea of

leaving London, and propoſe viſiting Lady Mary Malcolm, whoſe ſedate good ſenſe, and judicious friendſhip, will aſſiſt me in the difficult taſk of regulating my heart and affections: ſhe, whoſe ſufferings were of a ſimilar nature for ſo many years, whoſe patient endurance, whoſe fortitude, whoſe *diſintereſtedneſs* form ſuch a contraſt with the narrow minded Louiſa.

And Mrs. Blandford, too! mild, amiable, ſuperiour woman! I look back to the niggardly praiſe I beſtowed upon her, but a few pages before, and bluſh—how ſhall I now be able to atone for my backwardneſs in return to all her condeſcending advances?

Lady Belfont approves of my going to Lady Mary Malcolm: I have written this morning to make the offer, and already find relief in the proſpect. I hope Lady Belfont is convinced that my ſenſe of her goodneſs is what it ought to be; indeed ſhe acts the part of the moſt attentive parent; I know that my welfare is her object; ſtill, Henry, I think I detect a view beyond what ſhe quite avows. Sir George Rutland ranks high in her eſteem; ſhe often makes him her theme, and is laviſh in his praiſe; even

in ſome points raiſing him above Mr. Stanville, whoſe eccentricity, as well as a ſlight degree of caprice in his temper, is pointed out to my notice, accompanied with the obſervation, that theſe faults exiſted before the unhappy ſtate of mind, under which he now labours, could ſerve as their excuſe. Do you recollect what Perefixe ſays of Henry the Fourth. "*N'eſt il pas aſſez grand, pour qu'on puiſſe convenir de ſes défauts?*" and perhaps even the more amiable for them; perfection, in a human being, would throw all others at too great a diſtance. Sir George Rutland of courſe has not Mr. Stanville's failings, becauſe he has not his tranſcendent virtues and abilities; more moderate in every reſpect; worthy, liberal, kind hearted, however; I would not be unjuſt to Sir George's merit; but who can be named in a breath with Mr. Stanville?

29*th*.—A moſt joyful obſtacle to my departure has ariſen, deareſt Henry. My mother has taken a ſudden reſolution to come over. Geneva is now a deſert to her. The recent death of my aunt has renewed her

grief for the loſs of my grandmother. Theſe repeated ſtrokes, joined to the abſence of her children—Mrs. Dartford's propoſal of a ſeat in her chaiſe—Dean Frankly to attend them—altogether form a combination of inducements, ſuch as ſhe has not power to reſiſt: nor indeed does ſhe wiſh to reſiſt them; her deareſt ties now call her to England. A ſmall lodging, and great economy, will enable us to await together your ſucceſs in enlarging her income. Of courſe ſhe writes all this to you, likewiſe, my dear brother, and I might have ſaved you the repetition; but I am ſo hurried and agitated, in the expectation of ſo ſhortly embracing her, that I ſcarce know what I write. Her letter has been delayed by adverſe winds, and we may look for her daily—almoſt hourly.

2d July.—My mother is not yet arrived. I have been upon the tiptoe of expectation theſe two days, and could not ſettle to writing. To day I am told it may be Monday before ſhe can arrive. Had ſhe reached Calais as we calculated, ſhe would have been

here ſoon after the letters: now the wind is again north weſt.

Lady Belfont inſiſts that my mother ſhould be accommodated for a few nights in Arlington ſtreet, and will not ſuffer me to take any ſteps in regard to a lodging, till ſhe is here to pleaſe herſelf.

The Dowager Lady Darly alſo puts in her claim: has ordered an apartment to be prepared for her, and pleads the prior right of ſeniority in friendſhip; and can ſee no reaſon for my mother's thinking of a lodging at all. You cannot, my dear brother, imagine any thing more gratifying, than the conteſt between theſe two invaluable women, who ſhould expreſs and prove the higheſt regard for our revered parent. My breaſt ſwelled with filial pride.

Meanwhile my departure is delayed—inevitably delayed, you ſee; but not from any fluctuation, or weakneſs of mine. No, indeed, Henry! I was fixed—immovably fixed. Lady Belfont had dwelt ſo ſtrenuouſly upon the neceſſity of it, that nothing ſhort of ſuch an event as this could have prevented me.—And yet what is the neceſſity?

—You would conclude from this word, that Mr. Stanville was here hourly—daily at leaſt. No ſuch thing. He dines here occaſionally; ſeldom ſtays longer than to take his coffee; never attends us, or meets us in our evening engagements; never calls upon his ſiſter in a morning. What is there, then, that bears the ſlighteſt tendency to confirm the idea of my being the cauſe of his irreſolution?

Mrs. Blandford, however, aſſigns this, and this only; and ſhe, you know, poſſeſſes his whole confidence. Intereſting Mrs. Blandford! I ſhall now loſe the happineſs of accompanying her part of my road, which was all that reconciled me to the journey. I hoped to atone for my former backwardneſs —I ſtand deeply indebted to her—I have been inexcuſably unjuſt to merit ſo conſpicuous. I owe the amends to you, and to Lady Belfont, as well as to Mrs. Blandford! Never ſhall I now find an opportunity—

5th.—Our beloved mother arrived yeſterday, my dear brother, ſo improved in health and looks, notwithſtanding all ſhe has gone through ſince our ſeparation, as to be per-

fectly aſtoniſhing. I do now really flatter myſelf that an enjoyable old age is in ſtore for her. That fortunate fit of the gout, which we murmured ſo much at, has given a turn to all her complaints. She has infected the poor dean, ſhe ſays, for he was ſeiſed with the gout in his knee, for the firſt time, a few days previous to her departure, which could not be delayed, or ſhe would have ſtaid for him; and now, left to himſelf, ſhe is not ſure that, when he does get well, he will take the trouble to ſet out by himſelf. You know he is very helpleſs. I felt diſappointed at not ſeeing the worthy man, even at the moment I was embracing my mother. Her ſpirits and youth ſeem renovated, to find herſelf in England, and with her child and the friend of her early years again. Had her Henry been here, likewiſe, it would have been too much, ſhe ſaid, as the tears ran down her cheek, her brain could hardly have ſtood it.

The meeting with Lady Darly was almoſt as overpowering as that with me. Lady Darly would not relinquiſh her claim—My mother was divided by the wiſh of not ſeparating from me. Lady Darly can accom-

modate me likewiſe, but Lady Belfont will not hear of that, ſo we have compounded the matter. My mother accepts of Lady Darly's apartment, and I am to be there a night or two occaſionally, when Lady Belfont will ſpare me.

Stanhope Street, 8*th*.—I have a letter from Lady Mary Malcolm, who is leaving home for ſome weeks to viſit an aunt, married to a country ſquire in Cumberland, and propoſes my meeting her there, and going with her when ſhe returns.

It was fortunate I did not ſet out with Mrs. Blandford, as intended: I ſhould have miſſed Lady Mary, and been very uncomfortable.

Sir George Rutland is a particular friend of Lady Darly, which makes this houſe a far leſs deſirable reſidence for me than Lady Belfont's. His attentions to me are unremitting, and diſtreſſing in the extreme. He looks melancholy, dejected; and Lady Frances Ruthen, who meets him here as if by appointment, looks it all, ten times more, for him. He obſerves the ſtricteſt

ſilence to me, however, but not to my mother, I ſuſpect, who ſhows great partiality for him, and will, I fear, cheriſh hopes in him that will create freſh uneaſineſs to all.

To Mr. Stanville my mother appears as pointedly cold as his near relationſhip to Lady Belfont will admit of; which is the more marked, as his polite attentions to her are unbounded. He laid claim, in virtue of his intimacy with you, to ſupply your place as cicerone to her. So long as Lady Riverſdale had been abſent from London, ſhe might almoſt be conſidered as a ſtranger. Numberleſs novelties would awaken her curioſity, and he ſhould be happy to ſuggeſt and exhibit them to her.

My mother drily declined the propoſal; ſhe had little curioſity, and no reliſh for novelty. One of the chief advantages ſhe found in increaſing years, ſhe ſaid, was that of drawing the circle of our wiſhes and pleaſures within a narrower compaſs: new objects—new faces, new friendſhips, could only be attractive, or, at leaſt, ought only to be attractive, to thoſe who had ſomething new to offer in return.

Mr. Stanville ſtood checked, and appa-

rently hurt. There was another perſon far more ſo, who could not venture to interfere.—I truſt I did not betray myſelf.

My mother cannot think Mr. Stanville at all reſembles the picture I had drawn of him. Abſent—gloomy—agreeable by ſtarts, ſhe allows, but far from tranſcendant: the creature of caprice ſhe ſhould be inclined to reckon him.

Is this wilful blindneſs, think you, Henry, and meant to counteract her daughter's too keen perception of his merits? I think I never knew her ſo unjuſt before.

Mr. Stanville, however, is certainly very—very much altered. Alas! the more intereſting by far on that very account.

11th.—I have ſlept theſe three nights at Lady Darly's, and only gone to Lady Belfont's for an hour occaſionally. As it is a very pretty walk through the park, I have gone on foot, and never yet been able to eſcape the attendance of Lady Frances Ruthen and Sir George Rutland. He leaves me, indeed, at the garden gate, but ſhe

waits to walk back with me, and diſcourſes, by the way, of Lady Riverſdale's ſeverity and unfeelingneſs to me, as ſhe is pleaſed to expreſs it; of Sir George's deep and diſintereſted attachment, and of Mr. Stanville's increaſing melancholy and dejection, which ſhe foreſees will end in ſome ſtroke of deſperation; and if ſhe can prevail upon me, as ſhe did yeſterday, to increaſe the walk by one turn round the ring (for ſhe is much too ſentimental to like the ſtraight public walk, it does not admit of confidential communications), ſhe brings me back in a ſtate of mind not to be deſcribed, but wholly unfitted to ſupport me through the trials of the day.

My mother is not able to walk much now, the gout has left ſuch a weakneſs in her knees and ancles.

I find, Henry, that Madame d'Urtiſe made her eſcape from the influence of her prieſt, and has made a very ſilly match indeed, as my mother has informed you; ſhe has written ſome very unhappy letters—

* * * *

I was interrupted by a meſſage from Lady

Belfont wiſhing to ſee me immediately. I had been with her but an hour before, and was alarmed, as you may believe.

It was only the ſudden diſſolution of parliament, which obliges Lord Belfont to leave town in a few hours. Lady Belfont follows him on Thurſday, and is deſirous to take me with her, and wiſhed to conſult how to obtain this conceſſion of my mother. She returned with me to Stanhope ſtreet, and it is all ſettled. I accompany Lady Belfont, and my mother follows us to Thorp Caſtle with Lady Frances Ruthen, when Lady Darly makes her annual trip to Brighthelmſtone.

Lord Belfont apprehends a conteſted election, which is the occaſion of this extraordinary hurry. He has had gouty threatenings of late, too, which alarm Lady Belfont for the conſequence of the fatigues he will have to undergo.

Mr. Stanville's departure is now neceſſarily poſtponed, and not by *me*: he muſt ſtay to be reelected: but the borough he repreſents is in Somerſetſhire, and we travel north, ſo the ſeparation will be the ſame, you know. Adieu for a few days, my dear

brother; I ſhall hardly find time for my journal till we reach Thorp Caſtle.

Thorp Caſtle, 17th July.

Our arrival here is inauſpicious, dear Henry. We find Lord Belfont dangerouſly ill with the gout in his ſtomach: ſeized ſuddenly. We met the meſſenger at Bawtry, who was diſpatched to haſten Lady Belfont's progreſs.

Doctor Dealtry, from York, had juſt arrived before us. You may judge of the conſternation.

* * * *

Within this laſt half hour the ſpaſms have ſubſided; and the doctor ſays the imminence of the danger is paſt.

18*th July*.—Lady Belfont is quite ill with anxiety and fatigue. After a ſhort, and very diſturbed ſleep, Lord Belfont awoke yeſterday with dreadful pain in his head and eyeballs, which no medicine ſeemed to reach till this morning, that the pains have fallen into

his elbows and knees, and the danger is now certainly paſt, but we cannot perſuade Lady Belfont to quit his bedſide for an inſtant; and his fretfulneſs and untractableneſs are extreme. Her ſpirits are haraſſed, beſides, by accounts from Ireland, reſpecting Lady Grantin, whoſe brilliant ſituation there but make her levities the more conſpicuous. Truſting to Lord Grantin's indifference, ſhe no longer pays any regard to appearances: and he in London, a ſlave to the caprices of the B——, begins to talk big about honour and decency, and ſo forth. It will undoubtedly end ill.

20th July.—For theſe laſt two days the gouty affection has got down into Lord Belfont's feet, and I have been allowed occaſionally to ſupply Lady Belfont's place, by reading to him. He has fortunately taken a fancy to the tone of my voice, which he ſays ſoothes him: ſomething had need ſoothe him, I'm ſure, for ſuch another ungovernable patient did I never behold. Lady Belfont's patience and ſweetneſs are not to be ſubdued; and her health reſiſts this trial better than I had expected. She has now gotten a couch bed moved into

Lord Belfont's room, and ſleeps a few hours in the night.

21*ſt.*—Can you imagine, Henry, what this obſtinate man has taken into his head? Nothing but his own preſence can ſecure the election, he ſays, and he is determined to ſet out for ———. It is juſt as eaſy to be lifted into the coach as into the gouty chair; and all repreſentation of the dangers ariſing from change of bed, fatigue, &c. is in vain.

Lady Belfont and I attend him. I would have excuſed myſelf, to leave more room in the coach, and I felt that a few days of ſolitude here would be highly enjoyable: but I am not allowed. The humours of an election will amuſe me, and raiſe my ſpirits, Lady Belfont ſays. She thinks me unwell. A kind of languor and indolence I certainly have been ſenſible of lately: I ſometimes ſit idle for hours, without exactly knowing what my thoughts are kept upon—occupation of any kind is irkſome: even writing to you, my deareſt brother, as you may perceive by the little progreſs of theſe laſt days, in which I certainly have had ſufficient leiſure: ſtill I

have no particular complaint. Spirits, indeed, it is hardly poſſible to retain, ſurrounded by ſuffering and anxiety as we have of late been. I ſhould have been extremely comfortable alone here, if I might have ſtaid; but I am not permitted.

Thorp Caſtle, 24th July.

We have made a bad buſineſs of our expedition, my dear brother. It was neceſſary to ſleep a night upon the road. The houſe was full, and a very indifferent room indeed was all that could be obtained for Lord Belfont. How it happened, with all the precautions taken, that he caught cold, we cannot tell; but he awoke in the morning in torture both in the head and ſtomach;—ſhivering fits—fainting fits ſucceeded. The only medical aſſiſtance the town afforded was a ſenſible elderly apothecary, who ſoon averted the moſt alarming ſymptoms, and then was ſo very ſtrenuous in oppoſing Lord Belfont's proſecuting his deſign, that he was at length brought to relinquiſh it, and agree to return hither; which has been accompliſhed with

conſiderable difficulty, though attended by the good apothecary.

A bad night has enſued, and we are in hourly expectation of Doctor Dealtry.

25*th*.—Doctor Dealtry finds ſuch an alarming paralytic tendency from this unfortunate relapſe, that he has deſired to have more advice; and Lady Belfont has diſpatched a meſſenger to Derby, as ſhe has the higheſt opinion of Doctor ———. I need not deſcribe the conſternation that pervades the houſe.

26*th*.—Lord Belfont is rather better; Doctor ——— could not get hither till this morning. We had taken it in turns to watch at the window for every carriage that paſſed along the road, as if it could haſten his arrival; when I at length ſaw a poſt-chaiſe turn into the park. "Here he comes!" I exclaimed, and ran among the foremoſt to the door, when, to my utter aſtoniſhment, inſtead of Doctor ———, Mr. Stanville alighted from the chaiſe.

"Is Lord Belfont alive?" I heard him aſk eagerly.

I turned giddy, and was near falling, but had fortunately been able to ſuppreſs the exclamation of ſurpriſe that had ariſen to my lips; and Lady Belfont having run out to welcome her brother, I retired to my own room, hoping I had eſcaped unperceived among the number that had crowded to the door, and deſirous to recover ſome degree of compoſure before I ſhould again ſee Mr. Stanville: I found myſelf, however, ſo very unwell, that I had not the courage to go down to the drawing room till the dinner bell ſummoned me.

Doctor —— had arrived ſhortly after Mr. Stanville, and the conſultation between the phyſicians, and its conſequences, had ſo entirely engroſſed Lady Belfont, that ſhe had made no inquiry after me; and I flattered myſelf that my ſilly conduct had paſſed unnoticed.

I had employed no inconſiderable part of my ſolitary hours in conning over what I was to ſay upon meeting Mr. Stanville, that ſhould not betray too much either of pleaſure or ſurpriſe at his unexpected appearance; and

I entered the room tolerably ſatisfied with the little ſpeech I had prepared; but he put me ſo completely out in the very firſt onſet, by ſpringing towards me with a look of ſuch anxious ſolicitude, and aſked with a voice ſo tremulous, and with ſuch viſible agitation, how he had offended me, that I could only ſtammer out, "Offended me? why?—how?"—and the reſult of my morning's deliberation was effaced from my memory, beyond the power of recal.

"Surely, Miſs Riverſdale, to deny me an opportunity of inquiring after your health, was ſeverity beyond what the occaſion called for! Believe me, I did not for an inſtant cheriſh the preſumptuous thought that ſuch flattering haſte could be intended for me; and am not conſcious, therefore, of having merited the rebuke."

I was ſo confounded, I knew not what to ſay; nor can I to this moment recollect what I did ſay: it was doubtleſs quite unintelligible, and I felt that my embarraſſment muſt appear ſo evident, that I gave up all hope of recovering any thing like compoſure for the day.

Mr. Stanville did, however, manage to

reſtore me very ſoon to ſome degree of ſelf-poſſeſſion. He took his ſeat next to me at table, and his attentions were ſo reſpectful and flattering, his converſation ſo gay—ſo playful—his admiration of the beauties of nature ſo enthuſiaſtic—his opinions ſo coincident with my own—his deference for mine, when I could bring myſelf to expreſs them, ſo gratifying to my ſelf-love, and ſo calculated to put me into conceit with myſelf, that I not only recovered eaſe, but cheerfulneſs, beyond what I have experienced ſince Lord Belfont's ſeizure, or indeed for a conſiderable time before.

You will conclude from all this, that Doctor —— had greatly relieved our apprehenſions in regard to his patient. The moſt alarming ſymptoms have ſubſided, and he hopes to be able to bring it to a regular fit of the gout in the extremities. Lady Belfont's features were alſo brightened into ſmiles, by her brother's exhilarating preſence. The doctors, who are very ſuperiour men, one of them particularly ſo, regarded him with perfect admiration; in ſhort, his arrival has diffuſed happineſs around.

Mr. Stanville's departure for Somerſetſhire

had been delayed by buſineſs relative to a friend, in whoſe diſtreſs he had taken an active part, which gave time for the account of Lord Belfont's dangerous relapſe to reach him in London. This had appeared ſo very alarming, that he poſted down hither without loſing a moment, in the hope that his ſiſter's unhappineſs might receive ſome alleviation from his preſence. Ah, what unhappineſs is there that his preſence would not alleviate?

You have not ſeen this brother and ſiſter together; you have no idea of any thing ſo intereſting; I was not ſo much aware of it in London, where all is hurry, crowd, and diſſipation; and beſides, there appeared a general conſtraint upon him. But here—the freedom, eaſe, and ſociability of the country, ſhow every one in their true colours.

31ſt July.—I have for theſe laſt two days reſumed the early walks, dear Henry, which you uſed to tell me were an infallible recipe for health, "to inhale the ethereal balſam of flowers," as Armſtrong beautifully expreſſes it. Upon turning into a little copſe wood

this morning, not far from the houſe, I met Mr. Stanville. I ſtarted, I know not why, nor what prompted the inſtantaneous ſuggeſtion that I ought to turn back; it would have been very ſilly. Luckily Lady Belfont's opinion, given to me upon a former occaſion, darted into my mind, "that too ſedulouſly ſhunning the company of any particular perſon, betrayed as much as eagerneſs to ſeek it," and I endeavoured to appear unconcerned, and agreed, with as much eaſe as I could aſſume, to his propoſal of conducting me to a peculiarly beautiful ſpot, to which he had alluded yeſterday, and expreſſed ſurpriſe at my not yet having diſcovered it: indeed I have yet ſcarcely diſcovered any thing beyond the magnificent views from the caſtle, for my thoughts have been ſo rivetted to Lord Belfont's ſick room, and apprehenſion for Lady Belfont's health, that even in caſting my eyes upon the fine landſcapes exhibited on every ſide, I was hardly ſenſible, till within theſe few laſt days, of their claims to admiration.

Mr. Stanville is a good botaniſt. He directed my attention to many new plants, and mentioned properties of thoſe I knew before,

with which I was unacquainted. I cannot tell why I had feared that converſation would lag in our walk, for never, I think, did any perſon poſſeſs a fund ſo rich and varied; and he ſeems to have inveſtigated every ſubject with ſuch luminous diſcrimination, that you are not five minutes in his company without receiving, if not a new idea, new light ſtruck out of an old one; and the unaffected originality of his perceptions flows in language ſo appropriate—but all this you are well acquainted with.

Mr. Stanville ſeemed to take great pleaſure in tracing the ſimilarity of our taſte. I muſt think the higher of mine, for its coincidence with his.

Our path through the copſe led to ſome beautifully romantic broken ground, overſhadowed with oaks in every ſtage of picturesque beauty, and a noiſy little brook winding its devious way to the bottom, where it enlarges into a ſmall lake, by the ſide of which a ſimple grotto, formed only of ſtems of trees, is happily adapted to its ſituation, and ſeemed to terminate the walk: a matted ſeat ſurrounds the inſide of the grotto, from which you ſee the rill tumbling from rock to

rock among the trees in various directions, and forming a fine contraſt with the ſtillneſs of the pellucid lake at your feet. A deal table, with a drawer containing pens, ink, paper, a ſhelf with a few books, either poetical or botanical, form the appropriate furniture of this intereſting ſpot. The woodbine, twiſting around the entrance, perfumed the air—the goldfinch and thruſh warbled their ſweeteſt notes.—I cannot deſcribe the ſenſations that filled my breaſt—I felt a difficulty of breathing—an impoſſibility to ſpeak—I ſat down in ſilence.

Mr. Stanville ſeemed to feel a ſimilar influence; he had not ſpoken ſince we entered the grotto. The ſilence laſted for a conſiderable time: at length he ſaid, "The penſive caſt your features have aſſumed, encourage me to propoſe an addition to our walk, which could not at all times be made with equal propriety. You love Lady Belfont too well, Miſs Riverſdale, to wiſh to be excluded from taking a ſhare in any ſenſation of her mind; and ſhe will not herſelf be in haſte to initiate you into painful participations."

My intereſt was powerfully awakened.

"I thank you, Mr. Stanville, for underſtanding my attachment to Lady Belfont ſo well;" and I aroſe to follow him through a wicket beyond the grotto, which is not immediately perceptible.

We purſued a wild, narrow, ſhady path, which terminated in a ſecluded ſpot, thickly covered with moſs, ſo that not even the ſound of your own footſteps interrupts the ſtillneſs. It is encompaſſed with a bank of rocky ground, out of which trees, here and there, riſe in gradation, whoſe branches meet on high, and form a dome, impervious to the rays of the ſun. The diſtant waterfall gently catches the ear, but is not ſeen. The world appears to be wholly ſhut out, and the only object that preſents itſelf, is a ſimple, elegantly formed funereal urn, of white marble, placed upon an altar of moſs cut into three ſteps, and overhung by a weeping willow; a break of light, whether by accident, or intentionally admitted, falls upon the foot of the urn, and ſhows this inſcription: *Sacred to Filial Piety.*

The effect is indeſcribable, and awakened ſuch ſudden and overpowering ſympathy in my breaſt, already too full, that, aſcending the

ſteps, and kneeling upon the uppermoſt, I gave way to a paſſion of tears, which, on recollection, I fear may have appeared affected to Mr. Stanville; but the impulſe was irreſiſtible at the moment.

Endeavouring to recover myſelf, I looked round at Mr. Stanville, who ſtood with fixed eyes and folded arms, the tears "courſing each other down his manly cheeks," caſting a look upon me big with unutterable expreſſion: "I cannot feel aſhamed, Miſs Riverſdale," he ſaid, "of a weakneſs juſtified both by the ſaint who is gone, and the angel who thus deigns to embalm her memory."

I thought I never ſaw human nature ſo perfect, as it then beamed in his countenance; a heart ſo tender! with affections ſo manly!—

Neither of us ſpoke for a conſiderable time; but this moment has ſtamped us friends, Henry; our hearts underſtood each other. One tear dropped in uniſon binds more than months of intercourſe. He kiſſed my hand with reverential awe—and there is a change in our manner to each other, which ſeems to

have diffuſed tranquillity into the minds of both, yet which I know not how to explain.

Lady Stanville was a woman of exemplary conduct and great endowments. Our converſation turned wholly upon her merits, as we walked back to the caſtle, and was inexpreſſibly intereſting; but I reſerve the particulars for ſome future day; I am now going to take a ride with Lady Belfont and Mr. Stanville.

This is the firſt time we have been able to prevail upon her to abſent herſelf from Lord Belfont for an hour ſince he has been ill; nor ſhould we have ſucceeded now, but that Doctor Dealtry has been peremptory in inſiſting upon it; indeed ſhe looks extremely worn by the cloſe attendance and great anxiety of mind.

4th Auguſt.—We had the moſt enchanting ride yeſterday!—what a lovely county is Yorkſhire!—and how does the ſociety of friends impart a charm to every ſurrounding object!—Lady Belfont told me, that, in our

way to Thorp Caſtle, we had paſſed along a part of the road we were going. I knew not how to think it;—though I might be too much abſorbed by anxiety for Lord Belfont to attend to it;—and in truth I was leſs well myſelf than I cared to acknowledge to you, my Henry; but this air agrees ſo wonderfully with me—I am ſo very well now—ſuch an oppreſſive weight removed from my heart—I breathe ſo freely—London certainly did not agree with me.

At our return we found Lady Frances Ruthen arrived. Lord Belfont's illneſs hurried her departure; and my mother waits ſome other opportunity; ſhe apprehended being troubleſome at preſent.

Lady Frances was ſurpriſed beyond meaſure at the improvement of my looks; ſhe could talk of nothing elſe for the firſt five minutes; and then turning abruptly to Mr. Stanville, ſhe aſked him when he ſhould ſet out?

How unkind!—inconſiderate I ſhould rather have ſaid, for it was her fear that the moment might be at hand which prompted the queſtion. He ſtarted, ſeemed hurt and

perplexed, and then hesitatingly answered, that he had been too happy since he came down, in finding the cause of his sister's anxiety daily decreasing, to have admitted a thought so very disagreeable into his mind, as that of fixing the moment for leaving her; it remained for a *kind friend* to recal him to a sense of his misfortune—he added with a tone of asperity, which was instantly felt by Lady Frances, and brought tears into her eyes.

Mr. Stanville was sensible of the pain he had given, and all sense of that inflicted upon himself seemed lost in it; and I never saw him appear to more advantage, than in the endeavour to do away the impression his quickness had made upon her oversensibility; such kind considerate attentions, such agreeable playfulness; and she gave full scope for them, she did not soon come round: if this be the infirmity of temper alluded to in Mr. Stanville, I think warmth so instantly curbed and atoned for merely bespeaks that susceptibility, in which our very best propensities originate.

8th.—I cannot gueſs how it happens, my dear brother,—I ſcarcely have a moment in which to tell you how completely my time is engroſſed.

Lady Frances Ruthen has a paſſion for a phaeton, ſhe ſays; and Mr. Stanville, whoſe attentions to her have never relaxed ſince that firſt haſty minute, every day has ſome new object of curioſity to propoſe, which fills up the whole morning. The diſtances are beyond my ſtrength to ride . . . and Lady Frances regularly makes a point of my going third in the phaeton.

To attempt to make you a partaker in the charm of theſe little excurſions, and of the enthuſiaſtic delight I experience in the various beauties that are thus diſplayed to me, would require all the leiſure I could command at Geneva; and I have not an inſtant. We juſt get home in time for a haſty toilette before dinner; the afternoon is of courſe devoted to Lord and Lady Belfont; the evening to walking, reading, or muſic. What an enjoyable thing is a country life in England!

Lady Frances has not repeated her queſ-

tion, and Mr. Stanville ſeems to have forgotten he ever had any intention of going.

The progreſs of Lord Belfont's recovery is very ſlow. He is extremely debilitated and nervous, and ſuffers ſevere pain; but it is in the extremities, and that is perfectly free, they ſay, from danger.

13th.—You will perhaps think I might take an hour or two from ſleep, rather than thus neglect my journal, but I am obliged to devote that time to my mother, Madame de Sainval, &c. and, Henry, I know not how it is—my mind was certainly never more replete with matter to impart; but the difficulty to reduce it to the circumſcribed moments that I can now command, is extreme.

The deſcriptions of what I ſee will be forwarded to you by my mother, to whom they are now firſt addreſſed; and for the deſcription of what I feel—what expreſſions are adequate?—I ſcarcely dare aſk myſelf in what my preſent felicity conſiſts? leſt the very inveſtigation ſhould awaken me from a dream of bliſs, too perfect for this life.

18*th Auguſt.*—A letter from Lady Mary Malcolm urges me to meet her at her aunt's houſe in Cumberland, thence to return with her to Scotland, and paſs the winter in Edinburgh. Edinburgh, my dear brother, is, I am told, a place of almoſt equal diſſipation with London. My heart revolts at the thought.—Had it been ſome remote corner of the Highlands, in which I might enjoy the ſociety of Lady Mary, it would have been ſome temptation; but Edinburgh!—

This aunt, Lady Dunſkene, is, it ſeems, an old acquaintance of Lady Frances Ruthen's, whom ſhe has long promiſed to viſit; and ſhe inſtantly offered to conduct me thither. Such a delightful opportunity as this would be for me to ſee the lakes, ſhe ſaid, and ſuch an indulgence to Mr. Stanville, who would of courſe drive us in the phaeton, to behold unadulterated Scotch manners in all their primitive peculiarity.

Mr. Stanville recollected various diverting inſtances that had been reported to him, of the old lady's pride, dignity, and ſtaunch adherence to the Jacobite principles of her youth, contraſted with her Engliſh foxhunting whig huſband. He ſhould be delighted

with the permiſſion to convey us thither: his horſes would accompliſh it with eaſe in a couple of days, and our maids might follow with the baggage in Lady Frances Ruthen's chaiſe.

I was perfectly ſenſible that there were objections to this plan; at the ſame time I found it difficult to ſtate them, farther than by obſerving, that it would hardly be kind in us *all* to leave Lady Belfont at once.

Mr. Stanville ſeemed to ſhrink from the apprehenſion of obtruſive forwardneſs. His eye fixed upon me with a look of ſuch full, and various meaning, that I could ſay no more.

And now, upon recollection, I am convinced *that* was very wrong, for certainly an anxious fear of offending was the predominant expreſſion; and mere good nature ought to have prompted my ſetting him at eaſe from ſuch an apprehenſion. I am ſo very ſilly of late, upon every occaſion that calls for particular preſence of mind, that I am quite aſhamed of myſelf. I really do believe that ſevere illneſs has weakened my intellects, my dear brother; I was not always thus.

Mr. Stanville is in general very attentive

to ward off any embarraſſment of this kind, unleſs ſome inconſiderate ſpeech, or propoſal of Lady Frances's (as in this caſe), throws him off his guard. The moſt delicate, reſpectful attentions alone mark an opinion of me, which is the more flattering, for ſeeming thus to betray itſelf, rather than court my obſervation; and the inſtant we are, by any accident, left alone, he gives a turn to the converſation, ſo wide of all perſonal alluſion, that I now feel perfectly at eaſe upon occaſions, which at firſt created an unaccountable flutter and dread in my fooliſh heart. Not the ſmalleſt hint is given of his intended departure; can it be that any change or uncertainty may have ariſen?

I dare not truſt myſelf upon this ſubject; and indeed why go beyond the preſent moment? So replete with happineſs!—ſo exempt from any danger of painful retroſpect!—let Mr. Stanville's engagement be what it may, aſſuredly from intercourſe ſo friendly, ſo innocent as this, we need never be precluded.

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aoth.—Lady Belfont was much diſpleaſed

with the injudicious propoſal of Lady Frances Ruthen, to take Mr. Stanville into Cumberland. It was very miſtaken kindneſs, ſhe ſaid, to flatter the inclination of the moment at the hazard of increaſing future difficulties. She thought it incumbent upon all thoſe who profeſſed friendſhip for Mr. Stanville, rather to accelerate his departure, than throw temptations in his way to retard it—and a great deal more to this effect, repeated in harſher terms than I now give it to you, or than it was perhaps actually ſaid; for Lady Frances colours ſtrongly, and has taken it in high dudgeon. Lady Belfont is ſo overgood, ſhe ſays, that ſhe cannot make the ſmalleſt allowance for the amiable weakneſſes of human nature.

Without quite agreeing in the ſtrictures of Lady Frances, I really do think that Mr. Stanville might be deemed competent to judge for himſelf, particularly where all but himſelf are judging in the dark. His friend, Lord V— has managed his election without his preſence, in conſideration of the call there ſeemed to be for it here; a very unequivocal teſtimony of his high reputation, aſſuredly Henry, to be *choſen* repreſentative

without ſo much as being ſeen; for this is no. the borough he ſat for before.

21ſt.—Well, dear Henry, Lady Frances Ruthen and I ſet out to morrow, to ſtay a fortnight at Brig Hall, and I do not proceed to Scotland, becauſe my mother will be at Thorp Caſtle ſoon after the expiration of that time, and becauſe, it is preſumed, Mr. Stanville will have left England before a fortnight is at an end, and then it is immaterial where I may be: at leaſt I gathered this from the change in Lady Belfont's language, in regard to my intended viſit to Lady Mary Malcolm, which, as I ſhall now have paſſed a ſhort time with her, I am earneſtly requeſted to poſtpone.

I am not ſo well ſatisfied with Lady Belfont's ideas in regard to her brother, as I have been upon almoſt every other occaſion. Overzeal is very apt to defeat its own purpoſe—there is not quite the candour which I have formerly ſo much admired—an air of ſuſpicious watchfulneſs——in ſhort, I know not what.

22*d*.—Lady Belfont threw out a hint at dinner to day, that her lord would, ſhe hoped, be able to leave his room to morrow, which ſhe ſhould doubly rejoice in, as it would ſet her brother at liberty to attend to his own affairs, which her diſtreſs had ſo unluckily impeded.

Mr. Stanville's countenance clouded over, for a moment, then recovering, he replied, though not without heſitation, that, as his election had been accompliſhed without his preſence, and his travelling companion was now gone, he propoſed making a viſit or two in this neighbourhood, and then ſhould proceed to Mrs. Blandford, and offer himſelf as her conductor to Thorp Caſtle, which would afford him an opportunity of hearing Miſs Riverſdale's opinion of the lakes, and the amuſements of Brig Hall, at her return.

I felt my face glow, and could not truſt myſelf to ſpeak.

Lady Belfont's expreſſive eyes turned upon her brother, with a look ſo fraught with affectionate compaſſion, and then glanced upon me with ſuch unequivocal intereſt, that, however inſtantaneous the expreſſion, it electrified me, and filled my breaſt with

compunction, for my late cavilling inſenſibility to her friendſhip, to a degree I could ſcarce ſupport.

At the uſual hour of retiring, I begged to attend her in her dreſſing room; I could not be at peace with myſelf till I had opened my heart, and expreſſed its contrition. I will diſmiſs Fermor in ten minutes, ſaid ſhe, with a friendly preſſure of my hand, as if ſhe underſtood, and wiſhed to encourage my purpoſe.

I flew to her with an emotion that almoſt impeded utterance, and throwing my arms round her neck, I could only exclaim, "Deareſt—deareſt Lady Belfont, forgive me! and reſtore me to that confidence which I will never again deſerve to forfeit—"

"When have I withdrawn my confidence, my dear child? Upon what occaſion have you ever had recourſe to me, and found it fail you?"

"I know not—" confounded to perceive that I had begun with an implied reproach to her, whilſt fully ſenſible that the fault lay wholly with myſelf. "The dryneſs—the ſeparation that has exiſted between us, ever ſince Mr. Stanville's arrival—"

" Has appeared to me to originate in my having probed you too deeply before we left town, my Louiſa. I have been grieved, but not angry at your late reſerve. It was ſcarcely poſſible that, ſituate as I am between my brother and you, you could do juſtice to my motives: certain, however, that your heart muſt come round to me again, I awaited its time, though not without great anxiety, to ſee your peace of mind more and more involved; but fully ſenſible that interference, at this moment, could be of no avail."

" Kind—indulgent—adorable friend! how very faulty have I been!—how very undeſerving of goodneſs, that I could miſtake for ſeverity, and inſenſibility!—To confeſs my injuſtice, my unworthineſs—is the only atonement—"

Tears choked me.—

The indulgent kindneſs of Lady Belfont's ſoothings was ſuch, as you who know her may ſuppoſe. How could I for a moment ceaſe to know her?—She endeavoured to excuſe me to myſelf, by attributing the tranſient alienation to human nature, which could ſcarcely retain impartiality in a ſitua-

tion so trying as mine—but I cannot forgive myself.

Lady Belfont expressed deep regret at having been the cause of Mr. Stanville's coming down, as it seemed to have thrown him entirely off his guard, and produced an intimacy which, however innocently carried on, would endanger the resolution, and increase the difficulties of both, beyond what either of us could foresee.

I trust in this, however, her anxiety exaggerates the evil; I ventured to answer for myself, at least—and if Mr. Stanville's partiality to me is equally pure, which I cannot doubt, I think I may answer for him likewise; that the ease arising from the kind of brotherly intimacy which now subsists between us, has so relieved our hearts, that nothing farther is requisite to secure our mutual happiness, than to be allowed a continuation of the same innocent indulgence, with which surely no engagement he may contract need to interfere.

Lady Belfont did not seem to see this in quite the same light, but waved the discussion for the present. Assuredly if she await his absence to resume it, she takes the

chance of my being little able to do the ſame juſtice to the argument which I might at this moment. You well know how heavily ſeparation from friends hangs upon my mind—my wretchedneſs at parting with my beloved brother was not of ſhort duration.—She would not, however, enter any farther into the ſubject.

I ventured, before I left her, to aſk, whether ſhe thought Mr. Stanville's deparparture for the continent as fixed, as it had appeared to be ſome time ago.

"Have you any reaſon to doubt it?"

"None, but the kind of evaſive heſitation I perceived in the anſwer he made to your ladyſhip at dinner to day."

"That did not paſs unobſerved," ſhe replied, "but I rather aſcribed it to the deluſion that now ſeems to veil his judgment, than to any change that can have taken place in his proſpects. Of an event ſo important, I think he would *not* make a ſecret to me, however he may withhold what he probably thinks would give me pain; ſtill I am too much in the dark, as to the whole affair, to hazard an opinion of any ſort upon it."

My mind is ſo much relieved by this ex-

planation, and Lady Belfont's extreme kindneſs, that I could not go to reſt [redacted] I had imparted it.

And now good night, my beloved brother and beſt friend. We ſet off early in the morning, and this remains to be forwarded to you with my mother's packets. May every bleſſing attend you, prays your truly affectionate

LOUISA.

THE JOURNAL CONTINUED.

Brig Hall, 29th Auguſt.

I have been here three days, without finding a moment to devote to the affectionate partaker in all my pains and pleaſures; and now I am ſo overpowered by variety of matter, that I know not where to begin: though unqueſtionably it ought to be with the converſation *ſupported* by Lady Frances Ruthen on our road; for, truth to ſay, I was a mere acquieſcent *liſtener*; unwilling to diſagree, becauſe not in argumentative ſpirits, though too much ſtruck with the contraſt between her romantic irrationality, and the judicious tendency of all Lady Belfont's communica-

tions, not to recur on ſome future day to opinion that will ſo ſtrongly elucidate the two characters, and in many inſtances highly divert you.

I haſten to introduce you to the circle that awaited us here, that I may carry you on with our daily occurrences, which are indeed of a motley nature.

Of my happineſs in ſeeing Lady Mary Malcolm I need ſay little; you will readily conceive it; but what may appear as extraordinary to you, as it ſtill does to myſelf, is the inſenſibility with which I looked forward to, or rather overlooked, the meeting with Colonel Malcolm, which, until pathetically expatiated upon by Lady Frances, had never occurred to me as being likely to produce an awkward conſtraint, from our never having ſeen each other ſince all that had followed upon his leaving Geneva. Strange, my dear brother! that feelings which ſeemed ever entitled to retain a place in my breaſt, however different from what they originally were, ſhould be ſo completely ſuperſeded. I take ſhame to myſelf in confeſſing that it was Lady Frances's information of the preparations ſhe had made for fainting fits, hyſterics,

&c. by arming herſelf at all points with ſalts, aromatic vinegar, eau de Cologne, and what not, that ſuggeſted the firſt thought of it. Then indeed I did begin to feel an uneaſineſs in the expectation; from which, however, I was ſoon completely relieved, by Lady Mary's expreſſions of regret at Colonel Malcolm's having been ſuddenly called away, ſince my reception of her letter, by the illneſs of a near relation, which might detain him for more than the time allotted to our ſtay here.

But what pen?—not mine, I'm ſure, can do juſtice to the maſter and miſtreſs of Brig Hall, the Counteſs of Dunſkene (counteſs in her own right, obſerve) and Mr. Trotmere, her huſband? Such faint ſketches, however, as I can give, you ſhall have, as preludes to the pleaſure I will hope may one day be in ſtore for me, of making you perſonally acquainted with this diverting couple.

When you aſſerted that the race of Squire Weſterns was extinct in England, you gave an undeniable proof of never having reſided in the internal parts of theſe northern counties, where many a hunting, drinking ſquire, that has never viſited the capital, ſtill evinces

the fidelity of Fielding's touches. Not that I mean to affix either the profaneneſs or brutality of the character upon Mr. Trotmere; the reſemblance merely goes to perfect ignorance of the ways and manners of the world, ariſing from total ſecluſion; to a paſſion for hunting, which gives to the ſtable and dog kennel a preeminence over every other object; and an exceſſive conviviality, which ſeldom ſtops ſhort of laying him under the table at the concluſion of the evening, whence his ſervants convey him to the counteſs's bed.

The counteſs's firſt huſband loſt his life in "*the forty-five*," in the ſervice of *the Prince*, as ſhe emphatically calls him; and ſhe has, ever ſince her union with Mr. Trotmere, inhabited the ſhades of Brig Hall, which might naturally lead you to expect a degree of ruſtication in her manners, the more probable from aſſociating chiefly with Mr. Trotmere's companions of the chace. But againſt this ſhe has guarded "with all her might and main," by the ſtricteſt attention, in her own perſon, to all the decorums and formalities of the *vieille cour*, which run her into an exaggeration of high breeding, that would al-

moſt be too much for the ſtage: in addition to which, ſhe is a woman of taſte and literature, an enthuſiaſtic admirer of Rouſſeau, and profeſſed follower of the ſyſtem of education laid down in Emile. But Heaven having denied a ſon, ſhe has beſtowed it all upon her daughter; and ſuch another wild, hoydening, pretty, artleſs ſavage, of near fifteen, you never beheld.

Then to complete the variety of the family circle, we are in expectation of Mr. Drummore, ſon to the counteſs by her firſt huſband, who has paſſed many years in France and Italy, and imbibed a thorough contempt, I am told, for Engliſh manners. He is returned, in conſequence of the proſpect held out of reſtoring the forfeited eſtates, to put in his claim. Having ſtopped for a fortnight in London, on his way hither, his affections were forcibly ſeized by a high-flying, four-in-hand, brilliant ſpinſter of quality, who hopes to reconcile him to his native country, by proving that it contains females as exempt from principle and prejudice, as Paris or Naples can boaſt. He ſtaid only the time requiſite to hug this happy conviction to his breaſt for life, and is bring-

ing the valuable acquiſition with him, to receive the parental benediction.

And, "though laſt, not leaſt," here is alſo Lady Frances Ruthen's precious nephew, with whoſe elegance and accompliſhments you are already acquainted *, returned from his *penſion* at Amiens, without one word more of the language than he carried with him from Oxford laſt year, but with an improved inveteracy againſt the French, and every thing that belongs to them; and who, having taken the opportunity of ſetting off at a moment's warning, with an old ſchool-fellow that had called upon him in his way back from the grand tour, juſt arrived at Thorp Caſtle a few hours after we had left it, truſting to the interference of Lady Belfont to appeaſe both Lady Frances and Lord Belfont.

My lord proved inexorable, and would not ſee him; and fear of encountering the diſpleaſure of Lady Frances unſupported, prompted him to ſolicit Mr. Stanville to accompany him hither, whoſe good nature ——I ſee you ſmile, Henry, and look in-

* Probably mentioned in the loſt packet from Paris.

credulous; but indeed I believe that good nature to George Darking, and the desire to reconcile his aunt to this freak, was the *chief* reason——that is—I do not mean to be guilty of the affectation of saying that my being here might not be an additional inducement—for certainly he had not drawn back from the proposal made by Lady Frances at first, till I objected—I only mean—in short no matter what—the investigation would be too long for the present moment;—but the fact is, that here Mr. Stanville actually arrived yesterday noon; that his presence seemed to give universal joy; and that when he talked of going into Cheshire to day, it was negatived with such friendly earnestness, as he seemed unable to withstand.

It is to him that I am obliged for a quicker and far keener insight into the characters by which we are surrounded, than I should otherwise have had. His wit has rather more of a satirical cast than I was at first aware of; but there is such infinite pleasantry and playfulness in his manner of turning people into ridicule, that he really seems, like Lady Teazle, "to laugh at his friends out of pure good nature."

There was no great difficulty in reconciling Lady Frances to her nephew; the very ſight of Mr. Stanville did half the buſineſs; and her weak indulgence for the fooliſh young man accompliſhed the reſt, without his taking the trouble to offer any one excuſe for having gone exactly contrary to her intention of his remaining there two years, except that it was "ſuch a d—d bore, he could ſtand it no longer."

1*ſt Sept.*—Lady Mary Malcolm is particularly ſtruck with Mr. Stanville, my dear brother. How fortunate that he happened to come! She will be far better able to judge of all I have to tell her, from having ſeen him; for I ſhall certainly appeal to her ſuperiour and diſcriminating ſenſe, the very firſt moment after he leaves us, in which I can gather ſufficient courage to enter upon the ſubject.

Lady Mary is inexhauſtible upon the topic of her own happineſs; and indeed the efficacy of content is conſpicuous, in the wonderful change in her appearance: I ſhould ſcarcely

have recogniſed her. She is reſtored to a brilliancy of beauty, a gayety, an animation, of which I had no idea. She extremely regrets that Colonel Malcolm's abſence robs me of the ſatisfaction of ſeeing *his* happineſs likewiſe; for in *that* is ſummed up the perfection of hers; and to *me* ſhe refers it all.—O, Henry, how undeſervedly! This is a ſubject upon which I ſhall never wholly acquit myſelf to myſelf; but I will not teaze you with repetitions——

* * * *

I was interrupted by a meſſage from Lady Dunſkene, deſiring to ſee me in the parlour. She apologiſed, when I went down, for the trouble ſhe was giving me, which was occaſioned by the reception of a letter from her ſon, informing her that he ſhould be here by dinner time, with his lady, and an Italian nobleman. Lady Mary Malcolm is gone to take a ride, and the improvements to be made in the preparations for the reception of Mr. and Mrs. Drummore, on account of the addition of this count, whoſe arrival was unforeſeen, are ſo manifold, that they could neither be delayed till Lady Mary's return, nor yet encountered without the aſſiſtance of

ſome perſon of taſte, as her ladyſhip was pleaſed to tell me. "For aws to the gude mon, he'll no faſh wi duing the honors ye ken; and gude troth he'd no mack muckle o't, gen he did, it wull aw raſt wi me to gi' 'em a reception that wull convince the Etawlian count he's no juſt coming tull a parcel o' hottentots, which Is'e engage my ſon has repreſented us aw to be."

The counteſs then called upon John the butler, to produce the ornaments deſtined for the middle of the table, which conſiſt of an equeſtrian ſtatue of Charles the Firſt, of white marble, of pretty conſiderable ſize; a Chineſe pagoda of ivory; and a repreſentation of an Egyptian pyramid in ſcaglione.

"Noo meſs, I ken unka weel," reſumed her ladyſhip, "that epargnes are awthegither oot o' fawſhion, and I hanna gotten plateaux; but I mind reading o' the French plenipotentiary's fête, whare the ornaments reach'd tull the cieling, and ware aw emblemawtic; ſo I'm thinking o' placing the ſtatue o' hes Maijeſty e the centre, in compliment to the bride's taſte for equitation; aws weel as to the coont's being gentleman o' the bedchamber tull *the prence*; the Egeeptian

peeramid at the top, ye ken, 'ell be emblemawtical o' the anteequity o' my ſon's deſcent; and the pagoda at the bottom, may be conſeeder'd as a hint o' the height I wad ha hes ambeetion to ſoar tull—deed, meſs, et 'ell no be ſo vary common, and gi' a proof that country reſidence does nae ſpoil taſte awthegither, whare it has aince been cultivate."

This appeal was made with ſuch perfect ſelf-complacency and confidence in my concurrence, that I could not find in my heart to ſtart an objection, which I was beſide quite ſatisfied would be in vain—for I would not have you think me capable, Henry, of confirming the abſurdity of the worthy woman, to increaſe the diverſion of the company: reſpect for Lady Mary Malcolm's aunt would forbid it, if common good nature did not;—and indeed I was under conſiderable embaraſſment, at firſt, to ſuppreſs the ſmile that the old lady's peculiarities at times irreſiſtibly calls forth, leſt it might offend Lady Mary, till ſhe ſet me at eaſe by telling me that, ſenſible as ſhe was of her aunt's real worth, ſhe could not always refrain from it herſelf

My ſilence being conſtrued into unqualified aſſent, Lady Dunſkene next proceeded to inſtruct John in ſome elegancies reſpecting the mode of waiting at table, but recollecting that Colonel Malcolm had left his foreign ſervant, out of livery, with Lady Mary, who would underſtand theſe matters better, and give an eclat to the ſideboard, ſhe propoſed that he ſhould take the lead upon this great occaſion. To this, however, John would by no means agree. He had now ſtood at the ſideboard at Brig Hall eighteen years come Michaelmas, and if he had waited upon his honour the ſquire, and my lady the counteſs, to their liking, ſo long, he hoped he needn't ſtinch for ever an Italian count in the kingdom, nor have a mounſeer ſet over him to teach him his buſineſs.

"Weel a weel, John! I ded nae mean to offend ye; hooever, aws ets no fetting to hae a leeveree ſervant en the capawcity o' maître d'hôtel, ye may juſt tack the gude mon's auld brown and gold ſhute, wi the *ventre d'or* that he made up the year he was ſheriff o' the county: ets a wee tarniſh'd, but that ell no be obſarved."

John humbly thanked her ladyſhip, with

no small appearance of triumph in the success of his resistance, and readily consented to the consequent arrangements of making over his best livery to the gardener, and his old one to the huntsman, who are to officiate as footmen for the day.

Blithe little Rosalbina came skipping in, to know what she might have on? This was a difficulty which was very flatteringly referred to me, who have undertaken the adorning of her pretty person; but it suggested a greater in regard to the countess herself; though she soon recollected that Lady Mary Malcolm's maid might "peen up her auld Brussels lappet heed afresh."

These weighty matters being settled, her ladyship next bustled away to the housekeeper's room, and left me at liberty to impart to you thus much of the opening of this eventful day.

Twelve o'clock at night.—I cannot withhold from you the remainder of this treat, Henry, though I should sit up all night to give it you.

Upon laying down my pen, I went into

the breakfaſt parlour in queſt of Roſalbina, where I found Mr. Stanville, returned from eſcorting Lady Mary Malcolm, who had agreed to dine with the lady ſhe went to viſit, unknowing what great expectations the day teemed with at Brig Hall. She had ſet out before the arrival of the letters.

Mr. Stanville was not a little amuſed with the account I gave him of the conſultation to which I had been called, and choſe to conſider my ſilent aſſent to the counteſs's taſte, as incurring a part of the reſponſibility —the vein of drollery he indulged upon this ſubject, was interrupted by the entrance of Roſalbina, who bawled, from as far as ſhe could ſee us, "Goodneſs me, Miſs Riverſdale, what do you think? maa ſays ſhe'll ſend for a concert of muſic—all for the count —how nice it will be!—Do, dear, tell me what a concert of muſic is!"

Before we could anſwer, the counteſs followed to impart the happy thought that had occurred. Mr. Stanville gravely ſuggeſted the improvement of having the muſic during dinner, inſtead of the evening. This was better again, and by far more elegant, particularly as the muſicians might have been at a

loſs for muſic to go on with for ſo long together as the evening would require, Lady Dunſkene ſaid.

" What muſicians have your ladyſhip in this neighbourhood?" I aſked, wiſhing to find ſome ground to counteract this new propoſal.

" Troth no muckle choice," ſhe anſwered. " There's the mon that teuts tull the pſalmodie i' the kirk, and the blind harper frae Penrith, and the gude mon's bugle horn, that can be blawn by the whipper-in, and ſawney Macalaſter 'ell keep them awthegither wi hes bagpipes.—I'll ſend for 'em e'ennow, and ſat 'em to practuſing i' the barn, oot o' my collection o' laſſons for the ſpeenett; they'll aw ken mair or leſs o' Marſhall Saxe's meenuet, and my Lady Coventry's meenuet, and Owr the Watter to Chairly; twa or three o' they popular tuens ell be ſuffeecient.—Et ell no juſt be ſae parfeck aws I cude weſh, but the coont ell ſee I ken hoow it oght to be, and he'll mack alloowance for no being able to get the firſt muſeecians at this diſtance frae the cawpital."

Mr. Stanville was ſo miſchievouſly bent

upon encouraging the abſurdity, that all interference was vain, and I retired to perform the taſk I had undertaken in regard to Roſalbina. Fortunate was it that I ſet about it ſufficiently early, to give time for correcting the errours I committed, in turning her bright cheſnut locks into ringlets, and tying a pink bandeau round her head, for when I went to exhibit my work with ſome degree of elation, from thinking it particularly became her, I had the mortification to meet with the moſt entire diſapprobation.

"Hoot, meſs!" exclaimed Lady Dunſkene, "ye ha boond up her temples as gen ſhe had gotten a ſair heed! I canna awa we't at aw!" and ſo I corrected my miſtake under her ladyſhip's own direction, and loaded her head with gauze, and feathers, and flowers, enough for a ball at St. James's; and poor Roſalbina was the exact repreſentation of *Ninette à la cour*.

The dinner hour was retarded, to give the travellers time for dreſſing after their arrival; but we were deſired to aſſemble in the drawing room, as uſual, that we might be placed in form for their reception. We were punctual, of courſe, and found the counteſs,

more countefs than ever, decorated with her Bruffels lace *heed*, three drop diamond earrings, large hoop, white gloves, and fan. Rofalbina was miffing, which was vexatious, as fhe was to have been found fitting upon a ftool at her mother's left hand: the vexation was confiderably increafed, however, when fhe did appear, for a game at battledore and fhuttlecock with George Darking, followed by a match at butterfly catching, had fo effectually deftroyed the fymmetry of the feathers and flowers, fome of which were broken, and fome loft, befide feveral flits in the beft muflin frock, that a pretty fevere lecture enfued; in the midft of which, the fquire, who had been fhooting fince daybreak, and knew nothing of what was going forward, entered with a pouch full of game, and two or three dirty dogs.

"Hey day! what's in the wind now, my lady?" he cried, as he difencumbered himfelf from his pouch; "what the d—l are ye all prinkt out for in this faffhion?—What ails Binny, that fhe's crying fo?—Come hither, Binn, I'll take your part, poor laf; what's matter?"

"Deed, John Trotmere, my bird, ther'a

nae time for explanation. My ſon and his laddy, and an Etawlian coont, hes friend, wha's gentleman o' the bedchamber to the prence, ell aw be here eennow; and ye ha but juſt a momment o' time to mack yerſell fet to receive them."

"I'll warrant, duck, that will be done in the crack of a whip—but ſee here, my lady, what a morning's work! Six brace of birds! —a leaſh of hares!"—tumbling them all out upon the ſofa.

"Hoot, oot! tack tent o' the ſofa, my bird! the ſlep's no on't; they mawkins are aw bluidy. Here, Jam," to a ſervant, tack "they fulthy brutts to the lairder—and caw the dogs, they manna bide wi the carpet uncover'd."

"What the plague is all this nonſenſe for, duck? uncovering things to make 'em unfit for uſe. If I'm not to have my dogs about me when they've done their duty ſo well, I'm off.—Why if you had ſeen that bitch point at that moor cock, you'd have thought her worth the ſpoiling of twenty nonſenſical carpets. Love me, love my dog, that's the good old ſaying; and curſe me, if Juno's turned out of the room, if I'll ſtay in it."

"Weel, a weel! my bird, dinna be ſae cappernyty, lat Juno ſtay then; ye'll ha nae objections to the ithers being caw'd away, juſt for aince, it's no every day that we'll hae to deu the honors tull a gentleman o' the prence—"

"Well, take 'em into the ſmoking room, and get my pipe ready there, Jem. I'm not unreaſonable, you know, duck, when you let me have my own way: but as for Ju—, d—n me if I'd give her up for any prince in Chriſtendom. Here, Ju! Ju! come upon the ſofa, poor wench, and reſt your weary bones. Look at her poor eyes, my lady, ſhe has run herſelf half blind."

Lady Dunſkene's diſtreſs was evident, but as ſhe ſaid no more, it remained unheeded by Mr. Trotmere, whom ſhe now, however, requeſted to haſten to pull off his boots. "What for, duck? What the d—l's the matter with my boots? Jem may juſt wipe the dirt off them a little, if you've a mind; but if any body's ſo ſilly as to object to boots in the country, why I'll teach 'em more ſenſe; that's all."

The rattling of chaiſe wheels now drew the attention of the counteſs, and reſuming

her ſeat with great ſtate and dignity, ſhe ſaid, "John Trotmere, my bird, ye mun gang and receive the coont at the feut o' the great ſtair—I wad gladly move forward to meet my ſon and his bride myſel, but aws this foreigner is wi them, I think ets contrar to etiquette."

"Why Jem can ſhow 'em the way, can't he, duck?—What the d—l ſhould I go for, to ſtare and look like a fool, and not know one from t'other? I can't talk gibberiſh, you know—"

Mr. Stanville, who had entered during the dialogue, good humouredly offered his ſervices—however, it proved to be only Mrs. Drummore's maid and baggage; and word was brought that the travellers would be here in half an hour.

This fortunate delay gave time for the reſtoration of order. Mr. Trotmere betook himſelf to the ſmoking room with Juno, where a large arm chair is appropriated to her ſole uſe; the ſofa and carpet were reſcued from the damage of the dogs, and once more all was peace and expectation.

Mr. Stanville's converſation beguiled the time, ſo that we were not aware how much

beyond even the delayed dinner hour it had run on; when a ſudden ſound of voices and loud laughter upon the ſtairs attracted our attention. Lady Dunſkene, concluding the noiſe to proceed from another romping match between Roſalbina and George Darking, ſtepped to the door, with more of diſpleaſure, and leſs of dignity, in her aſpect, than uſual, when, upon opening it, an exclamation of "There's my mother!" uttered in a ſqueaking, male voice, cauſed her to ſtart back, and Mrs. Drummore, almoſt convulſed with laughing, bolted forward into her arms, with "My dear madam, I am equally happy to pay my own reſpects, and lay your ſon at your feet with *whole bones.*"

The counteſs imagining the perſon, upon whoſe arm Mrs. Drummore had leaned, to be her ſon, now threw herſelf about his neck, which appeared to be ſubmitted to with ſome confuſion; whilſt Mrs. Drummore burſt into a freſh peal of laughter, crying out, "This is Count Solano—there's Drummore coming after us."

The poor counteſs's perplexity was ſo much increaſed by this ſecond miſtake, that,

inſtead of paſſing on to her ſon, ſhe began making apologies to the count, who could only anſwer by bows and geſticulation; while Mr. Drummore, who had certainly by far the more foreign appearance of the two, approached with all the reſpectful indifference of a common acquaintance. "*Evviva! bella madre mia!*" ſaid he, kiſſing her hand.

"I proteſt againſt Italian and French, during our ſtay here," cried Mrs Drummore, "and call upon all this company for ſupport. Drummore really has *not* forgotten his own language, and I am determined to drive all his foreign fancies and affectations out of the field."

"No one ſo capable, certainly," replied Mr. Drummore, with a foreign ſhrug, and ſhake of the head.

"Beſide," continued Mrs. Drummore, "I have promiſed the count that this viſit is to initiate him into the Engliſh language and manners; for he is juſt as anxious to paſs for an Engliſhman, as Drummore for a foreigner.—But your ladyſhip does not introduce me to your gueſts.—Lady Frances

Ruthen, and Charles Stanville, I am acquainted with," ſhaking them by the hand in turn; "but——"

Lady Dunſkene, endeavouring to recover from the confuſion of the firſt onſet (for never did *vieille cour* politeneſs experience a more complete diſcomfiture), took me by the hand, and leading me forward, ſaid, "Thes, madam, es Meſs Reeverſdale, connected i' the female line wi' ſome o' the firſt faimilies in Breetain——"

This circumſtance was new to myſelf, and did not appear to produce quite the intended effect upon Mrs. Drummore; for, ſhaking me good humouredly by the hand, ſhe ſaid, "Miſs Riverſdale's looks might diſpenſe with anceſtry. An ounce of good humour will outweigh a pound of blood with me at any time."

"No juſt the ſentiment that I wad ha expacked frae a veecount's doghter," returned the counteſs, drily.

Lady Frances begged to introduce her nephew, who had ſtood kicking his heels and biting his thumb at the window all this time. "He will be very glad to aſſiſt in Mr.

Drummore's converſion," added ſhe, "for his objection to foreign manners is very genuine."

"Manners!" retorted the looby; "Ecod, I ſaw nothing like manners among 'em! Not one of 'em even had the manners to ſpeak a word of Engliſh to me all the while I was there—jabbering away their curſed gibberiſh like a parcel of monkies, when they knew I cou'dn't underſtand a word on't."

"Perhaps, George, they might not know how to ſpeak Engliſh," ſaid Lady Frances.

"More fools they, then, ecod!" returned George; "I'll ſwear it's the eaſieſt language of the two."

Lady Frances, as uſual, endeavoured to palliate her nephew's nonſenſe, by reproving him for *national prejudice*.

"Troth, madam, I'll no agree that a predilection for our ain coontry es ony impeachment o' the underſtanding—but wonna ye be pleaſed, Mrs. Drummore, to ha yer womman attend yer toilette; Iſe deu myſel the honour to conduck ye tull yer apairtment——"

"Lord! do you make dreſſing in the

country?" interrupted Mrs. Drummore; "I am never out of my riding habit from the time I turn my back upon London."

"Faith, madam, gen I did na dreſs i' the coontry, I wad leuſe the airt o't, awthegither."

This raiſed an involuntary ſmile in all; but in Mrs. Drummore an unreſtrained laugh. I wiſh you could ſee the dreſs of which ſhe thus cultivates the art.

"Cry your ladyſhip mercy! I did not indeed conſider the difference of a few months in the country, or the year round," ſaid Mrs. Drummore; "but at any rate I could never beſtow *the time* upon it out of London."

"Ah, that's ſo like me!" exclaimed Lady Frances Ruthen, ſentimentally; "the ten thouſand intereſting avocations of the country, each claiming an appropriation of time!——"

"I appropriate mine by the lump to a very few purſuits, which anſwer equally in point of engroſſing it;" returned Mrs. Drummore. "I mount my horſe the inſtant breakfaſt is over, and ſeldom get home till dinner, if then; my father's four o'clock bell is ſo regular, it is not eaſy, if you take any

thing of a ride; but I never mind, a ſnack of any ſort does for me.—By the time I have dined, my phaeton and four comes to the door, and that of courſe runs on till dark; then four or five rubbers of guinea whiſt, and a comfortable ſupper, lead you to two or three in the morning, before you know where you are, in the very longeſt days. When the fox hunting ſeaſon comes, that ſwallows it all, you know—ſo I truſt my poor habit will find favour in Cumberland, ſince it has had poſſeſſion of me for ſo many years."

"Of courſe it pleads a preſcriptive right," ſaid Mr. Stanville.

The old lady made no anſwer, but with a very ſignificant look turned to the count. "Mouſshe le Comte wull no ha been euſed to ſic ane diſregard for etiquette, I imaigine. —Maiſter George wull ha the gudeneſs to convoy hem tull the blue damaſk room; Iſe gar the dinner wait a wee——"

"My dear madam," interrupted Mrs. Drummore, "the count would no more part with that great coat, and broad dirty cravat, which he conſiders as the true Engliſh inſignia," winking to Mr. Stanville, "than I with my hunting attire."

The count ſcraped, and bowed, and ſmiled, but ſaid nothing. Maiſter George had twirled himſelf out of the room the moment his ſervices were called for, and Mr. Drummore aſked whether he ſhould not be admitted " to the honour of making his bow to Mr. Trotmere before dinner?—"

" Faith, Mr. Drummore, ye maun excuſe my judgment, being a wee jumbled, which gard me no think o't ſeuner—we'll find him in his ain apairtment, and mortefeed, I ween, no to ha been dreſs'd to receive Mouſhe le Comte.—"

As they were leaving the room, Roſalbina came flying in, " Dinner's almoſt all on table, maa, and you never did ſee how ſmart it looks; and John's as fine as any thing!—"

" Hoot, Roſawlbina, haud yer gab, and lat me entrodeuce ye tull the honorable Mrs. Drummore."

" Lawk a daiſie!—and which is brother Bob?—"

Mr. Drummore made up to her: " I am enchanted with the honour of making acquaintance——."

But before he could half get through his

ſpeech, the little madcap jumped up, clung about his neck to kiſs him, and deranged his nicely powdered curls, to his utter diſtreſs and his wife's infinite diverſion.

"You enchanting, little wild thing," ſhe cried, "you ſhall do as much every day, and the devil's in't, if thoſe tremendous curls ſtand the double attack of your fingers and my tongue."

"To ſignify Mrs. Drummore's pleaſure, is ſurely ſufficient," he replied. "A deſire of what one loves, is an order which no ſenſible heart can reſiſt."

"This is ſnatching a grace beyond the reach of common gallantry, indeed Drummore," exclaimed Mr. Stanville. "Rather than infringe Mrs. Drummore's prohibition by a *French* quotation, you ſubmit to tranſlate it into Engliſh nonſenſe."

Mr. Drummore gave an unmeaning ſmile of aſſent to a joke which he did not ſeem clearly to comprehend; and a ſummons to dinner opened a new field of amuſement—

But ſleep is now gaining ſo faſt upon me, that I muſt defer the remainder till to morrow.

3d Sept.—It was impoſſible to reſume the pen yeſterday; and ſtill it can only be by ſnatches, which I fear may cauſe ſome of the ſpirit of the narrative to evaporate—however, I will loſe no time in apologies.

The very uncommon appearance that preſented itſelf, attracted all the attention Lady Dunſkene had hoped for, accompanied, however, with looks that fortunately eſcaped her obſervation; for ſhe was now quite in her element in ſetting off, to the beſt advantage, the pomp and pride of her table, of which ſhe does the honours with the moſt unremitting zeal.

Mr. Trotmere came out of his ſmoking room as we paſſed it, having probably but juſt had time to finiſh his pipe; for in his dreſs there was not even the propoſed improvement of the dirt being wiped off his boots. Mr. Drummore, who ſeemed to have reſerved for his ſtepfather all the warmth of ſalutation which he had withheld from his mother, ruſhed forward with open arms to embrace him; but Mr. Trotmere exclaiming forcibly againſt the "d—d outlandiſh cuſtom of men bruſhing their briſtles againſt each other," ſent ſuch a ſpecimen of the

gratification, in which he had been indulging, to Mr. Drummore's noſtrils, as cauſed him to fly off with a ſtronger expreſſion of ſenſibility than he had yet ſhown for any thing, ſqueaking out, "Jeſu Maria! no corps de garde was ever half ſo overcoming!"

Mrs. Drummore laughed. "What, worſe than the ſtables, Drummore? Poor devil! what trials your nerves have to encounter in this barbarous country!"

Mr. Drummore moved on, to as great a diſtance from the ſquire as the table would admit, with his lorgnette to his eye, ſcrutiniſing every diſh as he paſſed along. Mrs. Drummore placed herſelf next to Mr. Trotmere, profeſſing much delight to find any thing ſo congenial to her riding habit as his boots.

"Thank ye kindly, my good lady!" ſaid Mr. Trotmere; "I did not hope for any thing half ſo rational coming from London. My lady, here, and her recollections of former days in the two capitals, as ſhe calls 'em, where I never have been, and hope I never ſhall, peſters me to death with her fiddle cum fads about the ſmell of boots and the dirt of dogs——"

" Dogs! I've never leſs than half a dozen about me when I'm at home, and I'd rather ſmell a pair of boots than otter of roſes," replied Mrs. Drummore.

" Egad, Old England will do yet then, if there are many like you in London!" exclaimed the delighted Mr. Trotmere.

Whilſt this dialogue was going on at one end of the table, Lady Dunſkene, at the other, was endeavouring to recollect all that ſhe had formerly known of French, to make herſelf intelligible to the Italian count, who does not ſpeak a word of it, and who ſeemed bent upon making his court by being as Engliſh as poſſible; which, indeed, his whole appearance was meant to evince; for, in addition to the inſignia alluded to by Mrs. Drummore, he wore a brown ſcratch almoſt into his eyes, a club ſtick, and boots, moſt comically contraſted with the fine emblazoned ſtar upon his great coat, under which he wore no other.—Without the ſmalleſt reference, therefore, to the counteſs's ſpeeches, he kept ſmiling and bowing, withdrawing his plate from all that ſhe attempted to load it with, and repeating, " Ah, ſharming!—

Muſh oblege!—Roaſta beeve!—Plume puddino!" which was the more unlucky, as the ſtricteſt attention had been paid that nothing ſo vulgar as roaſt beef and plumb pudding ſhould find its way to the table: ſhe could therefore only inform him, that *poy-iſſon* and *patty veniſon* were the removes; to which he ſtill continued repeating, "Roaſta beeve!—Aſpettero!—Grazie!—*Maeſtà mangia ſempre plume puddino* * *!*"—At length ſhe called upon her ſon to interpret; but he was far too buſily employed in taſting of every diſh, and ſending away his plate as faſt, with apparent diſguſt, to attend to her. Mr. Stanville then took upon him to explain for the counteſs, that roaſt beef and plumb pudding were "no juſt to be mat wi at eelegant tables," but ſince ſhe underſtood they were his taſte, founded upon the Prence's predilection, he might depend upon having them every day during his ſtay;—upon which "Mouſhe le Comte" proceeded to eat of every thing that came before him, with an appetite ſo voracious and undiſtinguiſhing, as

* His Majeſty always eats plumb pudding.

proved it to have been a mere compliment to the taſte of the country, that he had expreſſed any preference whatever.

Not ſo Mr. Drummore. "May I take the liberty of aſking where your ladyſhip's cook came from?" he at length ſaid.

Her ladyſhip's attention was too much engroſſed to perceive the drift of the queſtion, and ſhe anſwered with ſelf-complacency, "Troth, my dear, ſhe's juſt a Cumberland laſs, that I hae enſtrucked myſel to ſend up twa eleevens, aws ye ſee."

"Jeſu Maria! a female," exclaimed he; "I hope to Heaven this remains of barbarity is confined to the Wilds of Cumberland! I have an unfortunate delicacy of palate, that never yet was gratified by female hands."

Lady Dunſkene looked confounded. "Do not, dear madam, give yourſelf any uneaſineſs upon the ſubject," he continued; "Biondino ſhall do me an ommelette, which will quite ſatisfy me; and in the meanwhile have the goodneſs to comply with my foreign habits, and let the melons grace the firſt courſe, and I ſhall do vaſtly well."

"Deed, Mr. Drummore, I'm no varry ſure there may be a melon awa."

"Raw young artichokes would do as well, then!" he ſaid, "or even radiſhes—" perceiving her ladyſhip demur at the artichokes.

"Troth, theſe may be all new-fangled inventions ſeence my reſidence in the great warld; I canna ſay I ever heerd o beginning denner wi ſic like."

Mr. Drummore drily conceived it "poſſible that many foreign elegancies might not yet have found their way to Brig Hall."

This put the old lady upon her mettle, and ſhe retorted, that ſhe might have hoped ſuch elegancies as ſhe had formerly learnt in the twa capitals o Breetain might have qualified her to do the honors to her ain bairns at leaſt——

Mrs. Drummore interpoſed—"Don't mind his foreign vagaries, dear madam; by the time I have hunted him round all the fox hounds in the kingdom he'll become a more rational creature, and prefer a good ſlice of huntſman's beef to all the ommelettes and raw artichokes in the world."

Mr. Trotmere was ready to jump off his ſeat. "What do you follow the hounds, my pretty one, with your pink cheeks and

ſlim waiſt? Egad, I'll be your ſquire the longeſt day I live—and as for a huntſman's round, there's one in the houſe at this very inſtant, and if you join me in ſetting it before all theſe fandangoes, ten to one but my lady will let us have it in; hay, duck!" to the counteſs, "won't you? The devil a morſel have I been able to taſte of all theſe cirlium kickſhaws! Who would have thought that a fine London madam would have ſtood by me? Why I dare ſay after all they're anotherguefs kind o' people than what I took 'em for, and I may be tempted to friſk it up among 'em one of theſe days yet, to look for a huſband for Binny or ſo, hey Binn!"

"Yes, do dear paa, let's go back with brother Bob!"

"Hoot, Awlby!—Deed, John Trotmere, my bird, ye munna crack ſic nonſenſe, to gar the laſs expoſe herſel—"

"Well, well, my lady, you're always tutoring me; but let's have in the round, and I'll forgive you; and if this jolly Madam Drummore will ſtand by me, I'll have in the whole Cheſhire cheeſe, and cut ſome ſlices myſelf to be toaſted, and a draught of the

beſt October to waſh it down—ſhall us, my ſparkler?"

"Deed, my bird, the honourable Mrs. Drummore's juſt macking a feul o' ye: aws to the round o' beef I dinna objack—but yer toaſted cheeſe 'ell juſt turn Mouſshe le Comte ſeeck."

"Whatever it may do the count, I muſt take the liberty to obſerve that it's what I could not undertake to encounter," ſaid Mr. Drummore.

Here the ſudden ſtriking up of Marſhal Saxe's minuet from behind the ſcreen, in notes ſo diſcordant as I ſuppoſe never were combined before, ſpread diſmay around. The count's politeneſs confined the expreſſion of his unhappineſs to his looks: Mr. Drummore, in an agony, clapped his hands to his ears, and jumped up to leave the room; but having, in obedience to foreign cuſtoms, tucked the table cloth, for want of napkins, into his button hole, the ſudden jirk overſet King Charles, with a dreadful craſh of the fine old china diſhes, which drew forth ſcreams from one end of the table, and peals of laughter from the other,

increaſing the horrible diſcord to a degree that baffles deſcription, and from which Mr. Drummore made his eſcape, without the ſlighteſt appearance of attention to the miſchief he had occaſioned.

John the butler, formerly a ſoldier, was far too rigid a diſciplinarian to diſobey the ſtrict injunction he had received from the counteſs, not to ſtir from the ſideboard till the ſecond courſe ſhould come in; his groteſque figure, conſiderably heightened by his finery proving ſo tight as to oblige him to keep his arms a kimbo, remained therefore immovably pinned to the ſideboard during all the motion and buſtle to reſtore order that reigned throughout the room, and added not a little to the comic effect of the whole ſcene. The broken fragments being diſpoſed of, the muſicians diſmiſſed, and Mr. Drummore recalled, poor King Charles's deſtined head having again fallen a ſacrifice was too obvious a joke for Mr. Trotmere to miſs. "The d—l! who would have looked for a ſecond Oliver from your own fleſh and blood, my lady?" he exclaimed, ſcarce able to articulate for laughing.

This untimely joke effected what all the

diſcomfitures of the day had failed in; it triumphed over the good old lady's politeneſs; her brow clouded, her eyes darted indignation, and, with an aſperity I did not conceive to have been in her nature, ſhe retorted, "A *Wheg* only cud ha the eenhumawnity to laugh at ony weckedneſs that it cud ſhute his entereſt to parpetrate."

Mr. Stanville wiſhing to give a turn to her diſpleaſure, attempted to carry the compariſon of Mr. Drummore back to Nero, who enlivened his crimes with muſic; but it would not do: the cloud was not entirely diſpelled till we retired after dinner, when the counteſs eaſed her boſom of the remaining load, by imparting to us, that what had ſo particularly ſhocked her, was the fear that the count ſhould have conveyed to *the Prince* a doubt of her loyalty, in ſuffering "ſic blaſphemy" to be uttered in her preſence. We of courſe all joined in reaſſuring her, upon the ground of the count's ignorance of Engliſh, which in her wrath ſhe had overlooked; and by the time the gentlemen came to coffee, ſhe was reſtored to her wonted urbanity.

"Noo, Mouſhe le Comte, I'll bed de-

ſeeance tull my ſon's cruticiſms, and gee ye ſome o the baſt Mokoa coffee ye'll ha met wi."

"Ah, muſh oblige, my lady—ſharming—maêſtà beve ſempre—alway trinke Mokoa café."

"Wad Heeven I cud ha the honour o ſarving him wi't! et ſud be upo' my knees."

As Mr. Trotmere had remained at his bottle, no obſervations were made upon this ſpeech, which might otherwiſe have revived grievances, being an inexhauſtible topic of altercation adhered to by the counteſs with all the zeal of undiminiſhed loyalty, and eternally cavilled at by the ſquire, chiefly, I really believe, for the fun of putting her out of temper.

"Half an ounce to a cup, I hope!" ſaid Mr. Drummore, as Lady Dunſkene was putting the coffee into the pot.

"Juſt ſae, my dear, and boil'd tull a ſengle bubble. Yer grandfaither, the Earl o Glencourie, broght the airt frae Conſtantinople, and I vailue myſel upo' no ha'ing degenerate; and I'm ſae parteckular aws to the roaſting, that the roaſter's aye keept en my ain dreſſing room——"

" Roaſter! Jeſu Maria, there can be no accuracy in a roaſter! Permit me to ſuggeſt it ſhould be done in a ſhovel, over the charcoal, till the oil appears upon the bean;—that's the ſignal of perfection—a ſecond more or leſs, is deſtruction."

" Weel a weel, I hae learn'd to judge o't frae habit, and I dinna gae muckle wrang, and then ets ground dirackly."

" Ground! my dear madam, I beg you ten thouſand pardons; but my grandfather muſt have entirely forgotten his leſſon, ground coffee is not drinkable; pounded, ma'am, believe me! the Turks always pound it—"

" Faith, Mr. Drummore!" very gravely, " its unka faſhious no to ha the gude fortin to pleaſe ye in ony thing."

" I beg forgiveneſs a thouſand times, I hadn't an idea of finding fault; and an increaſed quantity of ſugar candy will do away the harſhneſs of the roaſting."

" By my troth I dinna believe ther a bet ſugar cawndy to be gotten i' Penrith."

" Why then you muſt abſolutely excuſe me, but I cannot taſte a drop.—I entreat it may not give you the ſlighteſt uneaſineſs—I ſo ſeldom find it to my mind in this country,

that I am quite accuſtomed to be ſatisfied with the *chaſſe*, and forego the café."

"The what?"

"Chaſſe café—liqueur of any kind; Maraſquin the beſt, certainly, but if not at hand, parfait amour, ratafia de Neuilly—the commoneſt will do."

"Faith and troth! gen ſhrub or cherry brawndy o' my ain macking wonna deu, I canna undertake to gi ye ony thing batter."

Mr. Drummore, too much diſconcerted to anſwer, hummed a tune, and walked to the window.

Mrs. Drummore returned from viſiting her horſes, notwithſtanding the heavy rain that had come on, and the diſtance of the ſtables; no weather ever kept her from them, ſhe ſaid; and finding ſome of us had gotten our work, ſhe bid Drummore fetch hers.

He came back with a load, of which the bulk created ſome ſurpriſe; upon being opened, it proved a hammercloth.

"Preſarve me!" exclaimed Lady Dunſkene, "deu the varry employment o' women oreginate i' the ſtables noow o' days?" Upon finding ſome very noble arms, however, quartered with her ſon's, in the em-

blazoned eſcutcheon from which Mrs. Drummore was working, her reprobation was ſoftened.

"The improved energy of the female character may be traced to their very fingers ends," Mr. Stanville obſerved to Lady Frances Ruthen. "Now you, who are all ſenſibility and ſentiment, embroider ruffles; Mrs. Drummore, who holds both in contempt I gueſs, works hammercloths and rugs."

"Certainly," replied Mrs. Drummore, "when I work at all—but it ſeems to me ſuch a waſte of time; and in London that commodity is ſtill more ſcarce than in the country."

"For thoſe who wiſh to improve it—" began Lady Frances.

"That's what I reckon I do to the utmoſt," interrupted Mrs. Drummore; "activity in conforming, is my motto; for one muſt do like the reſt of the world. In the firſt inſtance, every body, you know, plays at cards all night, and makes viſits all the morning, and goes every where every evening; and ſo do I—but then I'm up as early as if I went to bed in time, and by that means I can ſee after my horſes, and get a

ride, or drive, of three or four hours every day into the bargain. I hate your idlers, who contend for ſo many hours in bed; and becauſe they are kept out of it at night, ſleep away the whole forenoon. Four or five hours is the utmoſt that nature requires. I've the King of Pruſſia's authority for it, you know—"

"I expected you to quote Young's admonition," ſaid Lady Frances; "we take no note of time, but from its loſs—"

"Mrs. Drummore, on the contrary, gives it the ſpur, and ſeems to gallop it twice round in the twenty-four hours," ſaid Mr. Stanville.

"So I do, Charles, upon my life! that's a good obſervation."

"But *mental* improvement of time, my dear Mrs. Drummore, was Young's object, you know," continued Lady Frances.

"Lord, my dear Lady Frances," exclaimed Mrs. Drummore, "you know nobody ever thinks of *mind* in the *beau monde*; one ſhould only get laughed at, and called a methodiſt, or a blue ſtocking, for one's pains."

"I ſhould think the laugh might be re-

torted upon thoſe who affixed an impertinent epithet to mental acquirements, merely as an excuſe for their own ignorance," replied Lady Frances.

"Cry you mercy, Lady Frances! I meant no offence to your blue ſtocking friends; only you know learning, ſentiment, and all that, have been made ſo very ridiculous lately."

"Ay, the affectation of them," ſaid Mr. Stanville; "but I ſhould no more conceive Joſeph Surface, to be levelled at genuine delicacy of ſentiment, than I ſhould allow a lampoon upon *rouge* to imply a ſatire upon the native bluſh of innocence."

"Thank you, dear Charles," ſaid Lady Frances, "and do throw in a word for poor literature likewiſe."

"An example would anſwer better," replied he. "If I were out of this company, I would couple another name with that of Mrs. Blandford, and aſk who could diſſent from the opinion, that a highly cultivated mind confers the laſt poliſh upon female charms."

A glance of his eye ſeemed unintentionally to point me out as the object of an alluſion which was ſo far above my deſert, that, how

ever gratifying, my confuſion was extreme, and could not have eſcaped obſervation, but for the fortunate exclamation of Roſalbina, "Lawk a daiſy! do all Lady Frances Ruthen's friends always wear blue ſtockings?" which produced a general laugh, that gave me time to recover.

Mrs. Drummore, with ſome humour, deſcribed Lady Frances's learned friends, and thence proceeded to an eulogium upon card playing, and all the ſenſe and judgment it required; ending with an enumeration of the various games at which ſhe excelled, and whiſt above all, "which by the by," ſhe added, "clinched my conqueſt over Drummore. Waſn't it that ſtroke by which I recovered the game, when you had given it up for loſt, that finally made you mine?" to him.

"That, and a thouſand other perfections," he replied.

"Of courſe if I were not as much at home in the ſtables as at the card table, I ſhould think I made but a poor uſe of my talents. I believe you were not a little ſurpriſed there, too!—For you muſt know, Charles," ſhe continued, addreſſing herſelf to Mr. Stan-

ville, " that one of the bays my father gave me on my wedding day had fallen lame. I was bent upon driving down here four in hand. Tatterſall could only match the other three by a gelding that had never been in harneſs. He propoſed having him broke in, but I begged to be excuſed; I know they frequently are taught bad tricks, ſo I choſe to undertake that job myſelf; and I mounted the *break*.—You'd never have forgotten poor Drummore, if you'd ſeen him ſtare; and a rare tuſſel I had, to be ſure; kicking and plunging at a confounded rate; but I ſoon made him know his maſter; I brought him in as gentle as a lamb; and upon my life I think him now the moſt tractable of the four."

" Ah," exclaimed Mr. Stanville,

——" Such charioteers as theſe,
Might drive four harneſs'd princes if they pleaſe."

" Ay, you may joke, but the road along the lake is no ſmall trial of ſkill, let me tell you. I believe Drummore and the count both gave themſelves up for loſt there, poor devils! Juſt at the narroweſt, ſteepeſt part, Bouncer tripped, and the fore wheel grazed the edge of the precipice: it took a ſmart

cut of the whip to avert the danger; and I thought I should have died with laughing at their fears: and it had just occurred to me again when we made our *entrée*, which seemed to take your ladyship a little by surprise—"

"Faith, madam, I believe I'll soon no be muckle surprised at ony thing.—I had nae heard yere chaise drive up tull the door."

"Lord, no, how should you? We alighted at the stables! I always see the dear creatures walked about, and rubbed down myself, and get their feed too, if there's time. We should have been in, half an hour sooner but for that; and Drummore's impatient remonstrances, and the count's wonder, served to increase my diversion; for I would not let them make their first appearance without me."

Lady Mary Malcolm now returned, and the ceremony of presentation passed in all due form. I rejoiced to think that she had been saved from what would certainly have given to her far more pain, and less diversion, than to Mr. Stanville and me.

"Are we to have no music to night?" she presently said.

At the name of music Mr. Drummore started, with dread, I suppose, of the instru-

mental performers; but upon *my* being desired to move toward the instrument, he recovered some composure.

"I've not the smallest objection to music," said Mrs. Drummore, "provided I'm not obliged to attend to it."

"Not attend to it!" exclaimed Lady Frances Ruthen; "I think I never missed you from the opera the whole winter."

"No, certainly, mine is one of the best boxes in the house, you know."

"I beg leave to differ from that opinion," said Mr. Drummore, "I could not hear in it at all."

"Why that's the very thing that makes it so delightful. It's close to Fops alley, which enables me to speak to every body without being annoyed by the music; and you see the dancing better than any where, except in the pit, where one can't go, you know."

"I shall beg the favour to be set at liberty," returned Mr. Drummore, very gravely, "to seek a place where I may hear without interruption, in case I should have the misfortune to be detained the winter in England."

"Lord! Drummore, you need not be so

ſolemn about it, that liberty is yours without aſking for; you don't ſuppoſe we are ſuch a ſtupid ſet here, as to want our huſbands ſtuck up in the box with us; you'd be looked upon with a deviliſh evil eye, I can tell you."

"Subſcribe to *my* box, I entreat you, Mr. Drummore," ſaid Lady Frances, "where ſilence ſo perfect reigns, that if any of our colleagues were but to blow their noſe during an air of Marcheſi's, his name would be inſtantly eraſed."

"Why what a d—n—d bore it muſt all be," exclaimed George Darking, who was juſt beginning to recover from a fit of the ſulks, into which he had been thrown by a check from Lady Frances, upon his addreſſing to the counteſs ſome impertinent obſervation on the Scotch, which he meant for wit. "They are nothing but a ſet of ſqueaking, ſqualling foreigners," he continued; "and as to their ſkipping, and jumping, and twirling upon their toes, which you all make ſuch a fuſs about, egod there's little Jack the ſailor that might challenge any half dozen of 'em in a hornpipe. If you had but ſeen him foot it away upon deck as we

were becalmed in croſſing, you'd have known what good dancing is."

"My dear George," ſaid Lady Frances, "you have not ſeen any of the pantomime dances, that drew tears from every body laſt winter."

"Draw tears with their heels," interrupted he, "ecod that's a deviliſh good one!" And then he ſubjoined a joke too coarſe to repeat, and ſet up a great horſe laugh; from which Lady Frances endeavoured to divert obſervation, by requeſting me to ſit down to the harpſichord, and make a convert of Mrs. Drummore.

Mr. Stanville, aware that my courage was not increaſed by the idea of doing what was evidently diſagreeable to one of the company, whiſpered me, "Might not Jacquet Drotz*, do you think, contrive a lady of faſhion, that would anſwer every purpoſe for which Mrs. Drummore appears to be formed?"

This was placing her ſo near her true light, that it recovered me from the folly of conſidering her as any thing; and I ſat down

* An ingenious mechanic, whoſe automatons performed wonders.

without hesitation, and sang two or three of Mr. Stanville's favourites; for his taste and judgment in music, Henry, are equal to every thing else.

Rosalbina, who had crept close to my elbow, whispered, "I wish I might ask for a song."

"Do, Miss Trotmere!"

"Why—Can you sing Blowzy Bess and Flouting Poll?"

"I really never met with it."

The countess checked her. "Why indeed, now, maa, you can't think how merry 'tis, if you did but hear Tom huntsman sing it."

"By my troth, Rosawlbina, ye gar me blush."

"Rosalbina!" exclaimed the count, "*Nome Itagliano! grazioso assai!*"

"Deed, I thought et wad nae be unobserved by Mousshe le Comte; explain tull him, my dear mess, the full meaning o't. *Rosa alba* *, ye ken, wi' a sleght deeviation, to mark it's no just being frae the portrait

* The *white rose*, emblematic of the Pretender.

painter, I teuk the name. *Roſawlbina* encludes the awlluſion, without macking et teu obvious."

"*Ah, brava!*" ſaid the count, upon my interpreting this elegant inſtance of loyalty, which he promiſed to report, and expreſſed himſelf highly delighted with ſuch a proof of the *ſentiments* of the *country* of *England*.

Mr. Trotmere, who, in compliment to Mrs. Drummore, I believe, had left his bottle while yet able to ſupport himſelf, now came reeling in, and bawled out for a hunting ſong; which, being fortunately able to indulge him in, obtained a nod of approbation even from Mrs. Drummore, who ſaid, "It was lively, and had ſome ſenſe in it:" but Lady Dunſkene expreſſed her wonder, that I would "derogate from the uſual elegance of my performance, by adopting an eediom and dialeck ſo varry offenſive to delicate ears aws the Engliſh."

"What the devil, duck, haven't I heard you make her break her teeth with Scotch twenty times, yourſelf?"

"Deed, ets a varry deefferent thing, my bird, Daaved Reezzio's compoſeetions, and

Meſs's bonny pronooniation, gi them aw the ſaftneſs o' the Etawlian. I'ſe engage an unprejudiced ear might juſt tack the ane for t'ither."

Mr. Drummore ſmiled contemptuouſly, and begged to know whether I did the French *opera comiques* the honour of ſinging any thing from them?"

"No, d—n it, let's have no gibberiſh!" cried the ſquire.

"Ecod, that would be too bad!" ſaid George Darking; "I'll ſwear ſhe has more ſenſe than to ſing ſuch confounded ſtuff."

"Miſs Riverſdale might lay claim to indulgence, if ſhe ſhould fall ſo ſhort of *your opinion* of her ſenſe, George, as to comply with Mr. Drummore's requeſt. You know ſhe has had the misfortune to paſs ſome years upon the continent," ſaid Mr. Stanville.

Lady Frances, ever alive to the ſlighteſt attack on her amiable nephew, vindicated his intereſting prejudices as uſual; and the ſquire, concurring in their being not only excuſable, but meritorious, exclaimed, "Ay, George is an honeſt fellow, after my own heart: Come along, my boy, we'll go and

drink t'other glaſs, to the d—n—n of all ſoup maigres."

Mr. Stanville ſmilingly opened the muſic book to another ſong, and made no reply. Indeed it is the firſt time I have heard him give way to the ſlighteſt retort upon this oaf, this is the more ſtriking, as his ſenſe of ridicule is acute beyond what I have ever met with: his forbearance can only be imputed to the extreme kindneſs of heart, which makes him unwilling to offend Lady Frances, whoſe worth he reſpects through all her follies.

Lady Dunſkene having oppoſed Mr. Trotmere's return to his bottle, he ſwore then he would have the bottle into the drawing room, and the pipe to boot; and being ſupported in this by Mrs. Drummore, who ſeems diverted with any thing that's out of the common way, he carried his point, and ſoon put an end to the muſic, as you may ſuppoſe.

Mrs. Drummore was charmed to find, that, among the proficiencies Roſalbina had acquired in her father's and Tom the huntſman's ſociety, a perfect ſkill in horſefleſh, and undauntedneſs in following the hounds,

ranked foremoſt. A warm diſpute aroſe between her and the counteſs, who for theſe two years paſt has in vain been trying to check, what her early miſtakes in education have laid the grounds of. It was extremely characteriſtic and diverting; but there is no end to repeating all, and my attention was, I muſt acknowledge, a little drawn off, by obſerving ſome very extraordinary changes in Mr. Stanville's countenance, as he converſed at the farther end of the room with Count Solano. I even thought the cloud remained, though he tried to ſmile it off, when he again approached the work table, where Mrs. Drummore was ſettling a bet with the ſquire, who backed Binn's leaping the five-barred gate at the end of the park, againſt her, for a haunch and dozen, to morrow morning. Lady Dunſkene, however, objected ſo ſtrenuouſly, and Mr. Stanville ſeemed ſo much aware of the reaſon there was in her fears, that he undertook to laugh Mrs. Drummore out of it; which he did with a good humoured ridicule, and ſuch infinite drollery, as ſhe at length gave way to, upon condition that this inſtance of her

prudence was to obtain her being entruſted with Roſalbina in London the winter after next; from which ſhe promiſed herſelf unbounded diverſion.

The ſquire acquieſced inſtantaneouſly, as it might ſave him going after a huſband for Binn himſelf, he ſaid. He could truſt Madam Drummore for chooſing one after his own heart.

"Hoot, John Trotmere, my bird! ye're ay fulling the bairn's heed wi' eendelicat ideas o' huſbands."

"Nay, now dear maa, don't jaw poor paa cauſe of that, for it's ſo good of him, you know."

"There's a brother of my own would make the niceſt huſband for Roſalbina that could be," ſaid Mrs. Drummore.

Roſalbina jumped up, clapping her hands. "Lawk a daiſy me! Mayn't I have him, maa?"

"Deed, Awlby, yer pappaw ell juſt pervart yer morals awthegither."

"What the devil do ye mean by that, my lady? there's no perverſion in a huſband, ſure!"

"No! that there can't," cried Roſalbina, "or maa would never have married two, you know."

The counteſs was a little poſed: Roſalbina went on; "Do, dear ſiſter Bob, tell me all about him; is he monſtrous handſome? and monſtrous good natured?"

"Deed, madam," ſaid the counteſs gravely, "ye munna encourage her i' ſic ſenſual, eediotical queſtions; I ſud ha been parfackly aſhamed o' ſic an eendelicacy en myſel, as to ha beſtowed a thoght o' a huſband's parſon."

"What neither one nor t'other of 'em, maa?" perſiſted Roſalbina, with the utmoſt innocence.

"Deed no, Awlby," replied the counteſs calmly. "I married Mr. Drummore for the aunteequity o' hes deſcent, and John Trotmere (wha's varry weel allied likewiſe) on account o hes fortun. Ets no having turn'd out ſae conſeederable, was nae yer *fawt*, John Trotmere, and I hanna contreebute to mack ye feel it a *mesfortin*."

John Trotmere was by this time nodding over his pipe, which prevented our knowing

how far he was ſatisfied with this diſplay of the counteſs's delicacy.

" But your ladyſhip does not expect purity ſo immaculate to be of eaſy attainment?" ſaid Mr. Stanville.

" In my ain doghter I might perhaps hope to enſtull it, gen I were nae coonteracked by the gude mon; but the morals o the cawpital I wad nae be muckle ſurpriſed ſud be degenerate, ſith Wheg preenciples ha triumph'd. Yer Whegs mack varry light o the ſawnctuty o maitrumony, and gen a womman finds herſel neglacked, troth ther ſomwhat to be ſaid en her excuſe."

" If frailty were confined to thoſe whoſe huſbands ſet them the example," ſaid Lady Mary Malcolm.

" Don't be ſevere, my dear madam," interrupted Lady Frances, " conſider the ſeductions to which the moſt amiable qualities of the heart, ſentiment, and ſenſibility, expoſe our poor ſex."

" I don't know how to make much allowance for the ſeduction of a married woman," replied Lady Mary; " ſhe can certainly plead neither innocence nor ignorance."

"But Lady Frances means to erect a trophy to magnanimity, upon the ruins of virtue, in honour of the married woman who thus encounters obloquy, in the full conviction that she has no excuse to offer," said Mr. Stanville.

"Lord, how can you all be so severe?" said Mrs. Drummore. "What does it signify, as long as a husband is satisfied? and the moment he makes a stir, you know there's a divorce, and an end on't: nobody visits the poor woman any more: what would you have, can any thing be more moral?"

"Too rigid by half, I think, in many instances," resumed Lady Frances, "when you consider the allurements of passion under the disguise of friendship—"

"Faith and troth, Lady Frances!" interrupted the countess, "ye just turn yer heed wi filthy romances aboot love and sentiment, and sic like. As I said before, gen a womman's neglacked ets ane theng; but ye'll no perfuade me, that a wife wha has an honest mon o her ain, wull be thinking o ither mon. What the de'el wad she hae mair?"

The looks of Lady Frances were extremely

significant; but what her answer might have been I cannot tell, as it was interrupted by the violent game of romps which had been begun between George Darking and Rosalbina, from the time of Mr. Trotmere's having dropped fast asleep, and which now brought them into the midst of our groupe, to the overthrow of the work table, &c. This awoke Mr. Trotmere, who joined in the riot, which long resisted all interposition; till the card tables at length silenced it, and concluded the events of the day.

8th Sept.—It has taken me more days than I had expected to finish the account of that memorable one, and many occurrences have remained untold, which ought to have found their daily place. We have had fishing parties on the lake *—an excursion to the other lakes, among which Derwentwater strongly called to my mind the beauties of the lake of Lucerne; whilst Mrs. Drummore and the squire have destroyed, I believe,

* Probably Ullswater.

nearly all the game upon the moors. You never heard of ſuch devaſtation as they glory in. All this has afforded a variety of characteriſtic comic ſcenes; of which, however, the relation muſt await greater leiſure, and renewed ſpirits: mine have ſuffered a depreſſion lately, from the gloom that has continued to hang about Mr. Stanville, ſince the converſation of that evening with Count Solano; and more than once I have believed I ſaw ſomething of moment ariſing to his lips, though after a ſlight heſitation he has again denied it utterance.

Lady Belfont has written to requeſt that Lady Mary Malcolm would convey me back to Thorp Caſtle, and meet my mother, who is expected there to morrow. The overflowing of the preſent party, which is to receive a conſiderable increaſe to day, facilitates our breaking away ſooner than was propoſed; and Lady Mary has agreed to accompany us to morrow.

Mr. Stanville's phaeton came to the door immediately after breakfaſt. He had approached Lady Mary Malcolm, who was ſtanding in the window with Lady Frances

and me, to ask whether mention was made in Lady Belfont's letter of Mrs. Blandford, or any other addition to the party at the caſtle.

"Mrs. Blandford is there," ſhe replied, "and Sir George Rutland is expected, with Lady Riverſdale."

I felt a ſudden ſuffuſion ſpread over my face at this unexpected intelligence; and Mr. Stanville turned altogether as pale. Lady Mary affected not to perceive either; but Lady Frances Ruthen gave a ſigh ſo deep fetched and audible, as muſt have awakened the obſervation of the moſt inattentive ſpectator. Her nephew put his head in at the door, to know if ſhe were ready to drive in the whiſky. "Ready!" ſhe exclaimed, in a tragedy tone; "I would not forego an inſtant of Charles's company for empires, when he is upon the very brink of leaving us, perhaps—for ever."

"My dear Lady Frances," he exclaimed, "what a tremendous expreſſion! I ſtill hope to receive Miſs Riverſdale's commands at Thorp Caſtle again, before—" He ſtopped in evident embarraſſment, and then pretend-

ing that he saw his servant doing something wrong about the phaeton, he abruptly took leave———

I remained stupified;—those dreadful words, *for ever*, vibrated on my ear, and seemed to seize upon my faculties, like the cold gripe of death. Lady Mary rescued me from the effusions of Lady Frances's participations, by putting her in mind that her nephew awaited her.

"And shall we take a turn in the park?" continued Lady Mary, after she was gone, "or should you be the better for half an hour's quiet in your own room? I would not oppress you, my love, by calling for more of confidence than you choose to repose in me; but I do not feel satisfied in the ignorance of what fills and oppresses this poor flutterer," kindly laying her hand upon my heart.

I assured her I was very anxious to unburden my mind to her, and obtain the assistance of her advice, to restore me to some sort of consistency both of feelings and conduct; but I was not equal just then to a conversation so trying.

And fain would I now, after a few hours endeavour at compoſure, give my beſt friend an inſight into my troubled thoughts, which but a very few days ſince appeared to me ſo ſmooth. The bright influence of Mr. Stanville's preſence ſeemed to be to my mind, what I had felt the firſt rays of the returning ſun in ſpring to my enfeebled frame. I was in ſuch a ſtate of exhilaration, and eaſe and happineſs ſeemed ſo blended with every object around, that I had neither wiſh nor power to inquire into its cauſe. Alas! too forcibly the explanation now preſſes upon me—that cloud upon Mr. Stanville's countenance—the fatal expreſſion, *perhaps for ever*, ſtamp the colour of my remaining days. Lady Frances certainly knew but too well what ſhe ſaid—there has been confidential intercourſe between them theſe few laſt days: ſtill, how very unaccountable his conduct—if his fate continue to hang upon a foreign object, why ſhould Sir George Rutland's arrival turn him pale?—Why?—In ſhort I can only bewilder myſelf, and teaſe you with perplexities, which a ſhort time muſt clear up.

Thorp Caſtle, 11th September.

We arrived yeſterday, my dear brother, and found my mother in perfect health, looks, and ſpirits — Mrs. Blandford — Sir George Rutland—but no Mr. Stanville.

Lord Belfont is quite recovered—Lady Belfont reſtored to comfort and cheerfulneſs. Lady Mary Malcolm was of courſe received with delight—every one appears happy; and I try to appear ſo too; and were it not for the preſence of Sir George Rutland, I think I might ſucceed: but there is an unavoidable conſtraint ariſes from an avowed partiality, abetted by a parent and friends, kindly, though miſtakenly, ſolicitous for my welfare. I could not otherwiſe be ſo ungrateful to the friendſhip of all theſe worthy hearts, united in affection for me, as to let *one* ſource of diſquietude ſwallow up every other claim—I *hope* I could not, Henry.

12*th*.—I found Lady Frances Ruthen alone in the breakfaſt parlour this morning. Her lengthened face, indeed, more than keeps mine in countenance. Were it poſſible

I could for an inſtant forget my woe, I ſee it pictured there.

She began: "This is an opportunity I have in vain ſought for ſince we parted from Charles, my lovely friend. How can you ſo cruelly lock up your heart from one whoſe whole exiſtence is devoted to the joys and griefs of others—no ſelfiſh motives prompt my curioſity; and yet you are cold and reſerved as on the firſt day we met—"

You recollect how very fulſome ſhe was the firſt time I ſaw her, which inſtantly diſguſted me.

"You are very good, Lady Frances, but I have nothing to impart worth troubling you——"

"Troubling me!" ſhe interrupted eagerly, "it is the very delight of my heart to be troubled; *that* was what I urged to Charles, or I had never obtained his confidence. Poor unhappy fellow! So devoted to one object—ſo bound to another—"

"Has Mr. Stanville, then, at length explained?—" I cried, wholly thrown off my guard.—Recollecting myſelf, however, I ſtopped.

"Why not as explicitly as I could have

wiſhed, for he is as reſerved as yourſelf; but enough to ſhow me that love and honour are tearing his poor heart to ſhreds; and then to find a rival in his friend, you know—and hear his generous declarations—that if he thought you could be happy with Sir George Rutland, it would do more towards reconciling him to his wretched lot—though to be ſure when I offered to comfort him, by dwelling upon Sir George Rutland's virtues, and the likelihood there was that he *might* make you happy—then he flew off again like a madman; for of his impetuoſity and inconſiſtency, poor dear fellow! I can give you no idea, only indeed that paſſion makes every thing excuſable, ſo I bear it all—but as for happineſs, I know no man ſo formed to enſure it as the worthy Sir George—the moſt kind, benevolent, noble heart, that ever beat in human breaſt—"

I fear I ſhould have betrayed an impetuoſity, almoſt equal to Mr. Stanville's, at this ill-timed panegyric upon Sir George; but we were fortunately interrupted, and ſhe could only ſqueeze my hand, and ſay, "This muſt not end here—"

I very much intend it ſhould, however—for her ſympathies are ſo manifold, and intermixed and blended; and ſhe ſo eternally betrays, by over anxiety to conceal, that, with the warmeſt heart and beſt intentions, there cannot well be a more tormenting or unſafe confidante. Lord Belfont calls her, not unaptly, "the univerſal repoſitory of griefs."

13*th*.—Mr. Stanville arrived juſt before dinner to day, with pale, diſpirited looks, and an air of dejection, that caught every body's attention. To Lady Belfont's and Mrs. Blandford's anxious expreſſions of ſolicitude about his health, he affectionately anſwered he was *not ill*; a little fatigued only—but to Sir George's inquiries he replied with extreme conſtraint; and Lady Frances Ruthen's commiſeration put him almoſt out of patience.

Some neighbours called in after dinner, and hurried us from table. When the gentlemen joined us, Mr. Stanville was not with them. To Lady Belfont's inquiry after her brother, Lord Belfont anſwered that Charles

had left them, and ſtrolled into the ſhrubbery, ſome time before they had finiſhed their wine.

Soon after Lady Frances left the room; and I am certain ſhe is gone to perſecute him. I found myſelf ill at eaſe, and whiſpered my mother that I would go and write to you—

And here I am, endeavouring to regain calmneſs by an intercourſe which, even at this diſtance, ſeldom fails of its effect.

16*th*.—I have not been very well, dear Henry, but have now recovered ſufficient compoſure to relate the ſhock that overpowered me.

I did not ſucceed in quieting the perturbation of my ſpirits by writing to you on Friday, and the ſerene autumnal beauty of the evening, ſo peculiarly conſonant to melancholy, had tempted me to try the effect of a ſolitary walk. I had ſeated myſelf under a tree, and was gazing intently upon the moonbeam playing in the diſtant lake, when I was ſtartled by the ſudden appearance of Lady Frances Ruthen, who ruſhing paſt me,

only exclaimed, "Haſten! haſten to him, for mercy's ſake!—I dread ſome deſperate act——" and before I could even utter "where?" ſhe was out of hearing——

I followed the path along which ſhe had come, without daring to aſk myſelf "what it might be?" leſt the bare conjecture ſhould deprive me of the uſe of my limbs, and hurried on with that undeſcribable dread, in which no one idea in particular fixes upon the brain, but all is tumultuous horrour. I rather flew than ran, till ſtriking my foot againſt ſomething I had not perceived in the path, I fell——

Unconſcious of hurt, I attempted to riſe, when the impoſſibility of reſting upon my right foot convinced me I had ſprained my ancle—at the ſame moment I diſcovered the impediment over which I had ſtumbled to be Mr. Stanville's hat—a few paces farther lay his ſtick—

This was at the very edge of the lake—I became inſenſible—

Upon again opening my eyes, Mrs. Stanville was kneeling by my ſide, and I found myſelf lying upon the matted ſofa in the grotto.—

I did not immediately recover enough of

recollection to understand my situation, but the sight of Mr. Stanville spread calmness over my soul, and I gazed on him in silence, without a distinct idea.

His extremely agitated and wild appearance—his anxious looks, and the eagerness with which he repeatedly covered my hand with kisses, at length awakened a confused sense of escape from some dreadful calamity. "O Mr. Stanville! you are then safe!" were the first words that found a passage; and a flood of tears followed them.

"Safe, Miss Riversdale!—Powers of Heaven!—Was it concern for my safety?—"

He rivetted his eyes upon me in speechless extasy.

"What has happened?—Lady Frances terrified me with inarticulate fears—and your hat and stick by the waters edge pointed them all to you—I know no more—"

"O God!—O God! This unhoped for burst of bliss unmans me!—" Tears choked his utterance.

"Do not let this weakness sink me in your eyes, Miss Riversdale!" he at length added. "I have met severe trials as a man

ſhould meet them, but I never experienced the agony of joy before;" and throwing his arm about me, he approached his cheek to mine, and wept aloud.

Henry!—to ſee the man to whom my ſoul is devoted overpowered even to feminine weakneſs by the diſcovery of my attachment!—The feelings of ſuch a moment cannot be ſubmitted to words, but the recollection is entwined with the fibres of my heart, and will diffuſe its magical influence over the remainder of my life.

Speech ſeemed for a while denied—till a ſudden conſcious chill ſtole over my mind, in the indiſtinct recollection of the ambiguity that hung over Mr. Stanville's actions, and impreſſed me with a ſenſe of impropriety in thus giving way to the tenderneſs that had ſo unintentionally betrayed itſelf.

"Let us return to the caſtle," I ſaid, endeavouring to diſengage myſelf from his arm, "our abſence may create alarm."

He ſtarted up, as if alſo checked ſuddenly by ſome paſſing thought, and I attempted to riſe, but again became ſenſible of the ſtate of my uncle, which was perfectly uſeleſs. "I

believe I have rather hurt my ancle in the fall, and muſt trouble you to get me ſome aſſiſtance from the houſe," I ſaid.

He looked terrified, and entreated I would ſuffer him to ſtop at the entrance of the grotto till I ſhould aſcertain the nature of the injury. I knew it to be conſiderable, and declined compliance, urging him to haſten in queſt of aſſiſtance.

Would I truſt him to carry me? No conveyance could be ſo ſpeedy or ſo ſafe.

I peremptorily refuſed, and he left me; but in an inſtant returned. "One word only, Miſs Riverſdale, to aſcertain my fate! Forgive me ſeizing this ſingle opportunity! One world only in explanation of Lady Frances Ruthen's damning ſuggeſtions—Is Sir George Rutland's propoſal?———I cannot ſpeak it—

"Agreed to by me! do you mean, Mr. Stanville?"

"That was what drove me mad," cried he wildly.

"It has not; nor ever will."

"A thouſand, thouſand bleſſings on your candour! O Miſs Riverſdale!—lovelieſt of

women!—pity my diſtraction!—forgive my inconſiſtencies. One cheering ray ſeems now to beam upon my dark fate! Could I venture to lay open my heart——"

The ſound of an approaching footſtep cauſed him to ſtart up, and Lady Belfont ſtood at the entrance of the grotto.

She expreſſed her gladneſs to find us. Conſcious of the ſtrange appearance I muſt make in her eyes, I fancied I traced an evaneſcent glow of diſapprobation dart acroſs her countenance, which Mr. Stanville's relation of my accident, however, immediately converted into unfeigned ſolicitude.

"Make them bring my lord's gouty chair, dear Charles," ſhe eagerly exclaimed; "the ſight of you will be no ſlight comfort in itſelf to him and poor Frances:" and then ſhe ſat down by me, and inquired into the particulars of my fall, and was ſo much affected with the diſordered ſtate in which I deſcribed Mr. Stanville to have appeared upon the firſt recovery of my ſenſes, that ſhe fortunately interrupted my narrative at the very moment, when a kind of choking ſenſation had ariſen to my throat, from a conſciouſneſs

that ſincerity compelled me to acknowledge the avowal of partiality, into which I had been betrayed.

Lady Belfont informed me, that the alarm of Lady Frances Ruthen's terrours had, in the firſt inſtance, been confined to Lord Belfont, who happened to be alone in the hall when ſhe reached it, and being accuſtomed to the magnifying properties of his ſiſter's imagination, he did not quite give credit to the full extent of the danger ſhe repreſented; prudently enjoining ſilence, however, he requeſted her to go to her own room, and ordered Weldon to go in queſt of Mr. Stanville.

"At our return from walking," continued Lady Belfont, "we fortunately aſked no queſtions. Not finding Frances in the ſalon, we concluded you and ſhe were taking a moonlight ramble together. Charles ſo frequently retires to his books in an evening, that of him I took no thought, till Lord Belfont came out of the library with a look of diſcompoſure, which I could not account for. I propoſed a rubber at whiſt. We were but three, he ſaid. I rang to ſend for Charles. The ſervant brought word he was

not in his room; and I thought I perceived an expreſſion in my lord's countenance which alarmed me. "Is any thing the matter?" I ſaid. "What ſhould be the matter," he replied; "is there any thing ſo uncommon in Charles's prolonging his walk in a moonlight evening?"—The tone in which this was uttered not only confirmed, but directed my fears to their proper object. I aroſe to make farther inquiry. Lord Belfont followed me out of the room, and bade me be ſatisfied, that Weldon was gone in queſt of my brother. Upon my increaſed alarm, and repeated entreaties, I at length obtained all the knowledge he was himſelf poſſeſſed of; and it amounted merely to the repetition by Lady Frances, of ſome frantic expreſſions Charles had uttered in conſequence of a teaſing altercation ſhe had forced him into, of which ſhe refuſed to impart the ſubject. Weldon had already returned once from a fruitleſs ſearch, and was gone again, accompanied by James and the gardener. A thought darted into my mind, that I might find my brother in a ſacred ſpot, where he and I have together and ſeparately, paſſed many a penſive hour, where it would not

occur to the ſervants to ſeek him, and whither, from the peculiar caſt of his mind this day, I thought it extremely probable he might have repaired. Judge of my ſurpriſe when I found you both here, and of my anxiety in diſcovering how much more cauſe there has been for terrour than I had apprehended. It is now evident that Weldon had found the hat and ſtick, and that his ſecond ſearch with the gardener and James has been in the lake."

We both ſhuddered at the idea called up by theſe laſt words, and remained in ſilent expectation of Mr. Stanville's return, who brought with him a ſervant and Merlin's chair. He had diſpatched his own man for the ſurgeon, who ſoon arrived, and pronounced the hurt to be a mere ſprain, which, with the aſſiſtance of a bandage and perfect repoſe, will be ſpeedily brought right.

Mr. Stanville's conſiderate kindneſs had ſaved my mother from any knowledge of the accident, till ſhe was ſatisfied by the ſight of me what it really was. She had been engaged at ombre with Lady Mary Malcolm and Sir George Rutland at the time of Lady Belfont's taking the alarm, by which means the buſtle had eſcaped her notice altogether.

18*th*.—I have been removed from the turret room I occupied, to a bed room on the ground floor, and by the aſſiſtance of the gouty chair I am wheeled not only into the ſalon, but occaſionally round the lawn, ſo that I ſuffer very little privation from my confinement, and derive inexpreſſible ſatisfaction from the affectionate ſolicitude and attentions by which I am ſurrounded. I have often found a ſmall evil, the ſource of more pleaſure than pain.

Various and highly gratifying have been my converſations with Lady Mary Malcolm. She ſo candidly, ſo impartially enters into my feelings; thinks ſo juſtly of Mr. Stanville; pities, ſo much more than ſhe cenſures, his inconſiſtencies; is certain the explanation of them will ſome day acquit him of blame. She is hurt at the apparent combination in favour of Sir George Rutland; hurt at his indelicacy in not perceiving it to be a perſecution; means, if opportunity offers, to have a converſation with him upon the ſubject; in ſhort ſhe has relieved, ſoothed, ſtrengthened my mind, as I expected ſhe would; and I feel it ſo impoſſible that Lady Mary Malcolm could be wrong, or unreaſonable

in what she might urge; that I really think she could almost persuade me to any thing.

20th.—I have at length had a tête-à-tête with Lady Frances Ruthen, which I have as much wished for, these last few days, as I ever shunned it before, and obtained an explanation of what had passed between her and Mr. Stanville.

She had followed him into the grounds, and found him seated upon the bank of moss at the foot of his mother's urn, so lost in thought that he was not sensible of her approach. She attacked him upon the singularity of his conduct, and told him that the evident unhappiness of his mind created the utmost uneasiness in all his friends, and most, she believed, in that breast which, of all others, he would wish undisturbed. "Alas! he was too well aware that a participation in misery, was the only sentiment he could hope to inspire." "How could he be so unjust to himself," Lady Frances replied, "as not to see the tender interest Miss Riversdale took in every thing relating to him?" He looked

earneſtly at her. "Does Miſs Riverſdale condeſcend?—Has Miſs Riverſdale ſaid?—Take care, Lady Frances!—Take care what you ſay!—how you revive ideas that agitate me almoſt to madneſs!" And his looks became ſo wild and diſordered that ſhe grew terrified, and heſitated what to ſay. He went on; "I did indeed think—I did for a few ſhort moments dream of a bliſs—O! to me ſo unattainable; and how dreadfully do I awaken to the torturing reality!" Lady Frances urged him to confide in her, to employ her: would he open his heart to Miſs Riverſdale? Should ſhe intercede for an interview?—"What could he ſay to Miſs Riverſdale?—Involved as was his fate, how could he hope?"—"Hope every thing," ſhe ſaid, "that the purity and delicacy of your attachment entitles you to." "Lady Frances, what may you mean? Speak what you know! I conjure you, as you value my exiſtence!" And his impetuoſity became ſo alarming, that the poor terrified, injudicious woman, hardly knowing what ſhe ſaid, believes ſhe aſſerted that my affections were favourable to him, and that it reſted with himſelf, by clearing up the ambiguity of his

conduct, to make me his. "Mine! Oh God of heaven, mine!—" he exclaimed, and remained for a time wholly abſorbed. At length ſtarting up, he cried, "Yes, there is a way—but what then of Sir George Rutland?—is not he?—" He ſtopped. Lady Frances, at a loſs, remained ſilent. He ſeized upon both her hands: "I charge you, as you hope for mercy, Lady Frances, ſpeak the truth! There is more at ſtake than you can ſuppoſe, or I dare expreſs." She then heſitatingly acknowledged, that ſhe believed Miſs Riverſdale might have given Sir George hopes —but—A ſudden revulſion ſeemed to convulſe his frame; interrupting her with a frantic geſture, he cried, "and you would ſuggeſt her angel purity to be capable of duplicity! Away! away! you have worked me to a pitch of phrenzy that knows no bounds;" and he broke from her like a madman, running too faſt for her to overtake him. Convinced that he was gone to throw himſelf into the lake, nothing remained, ſhe thought, but to make the beſt of her way to the caſtle, and ſend ſome one after him to avert his fatal purpoſe.

I need not deſcribe to you, Henry, the

ſtate of my mind during this narrative. I had ſcarce power, when it ended, to aſk her, upon what ſhe could have founded the cruel idea of Sir George Rutland's hopes?

"Upon Lady Riverſdale's ſtrenuous ſupport of him, and the knowledge of your filial duty, and eſteem for his virtues!"

"Have I not been uniformly explicit in my refuſal, and conſiſtent in my conduct to Sir George?"

"Aſſuredly; but then the delicacy of your ſentiments, and the purity of your mind, ſo evidently mark the line you would take, were Charles out of the queſtion."

"Good Heavens, Lady Frances, do you conceive that I could give my hand to one man, whilſt my affections were engaged to another?"

"And why not? Charles's being precluded from laying claim to your hand, is no reaſon in the world for withholding the pureſt, tendereſt affections of your heart from him, whoſe mind, delicate as your own, would ſeek no higher gratification! whilſt the worthy Sir George's unbounded confidence in your virtue, would enſure his happineſs as your huſband. You will ſee a ſimilar ſitua-

tion illuſtrated in my *Philoſophy of Sentiment*, where I have drawn, actually from nature, the delicate intricacies of Lionel, Amanda, and Honorius's reſpective diſintereſted attachment, as it was confided to myſelf by theſe beloved friends. True, indeed, the cataſtrophe was unfortunate, but that could not be foreſeen, nor did it of neceſſity follow, and therefore I have not recorded it. Lionel fell in a duel, by the hand of Honorius, whoſe ſuſpicious temper led him to the diſcovery, that his friend's intercourſe with Amanda had degenerated from its original purity, which, however, was a circumſtance too far out of the reach of common calculation to be recorded; and certain I am, that, in three ſuch breaſts as yours, Charles Stanville's, and Sir George Rutland's, no ſuch grovelling deviations could be apprehended."

Scarce able to ſuppreſs a ſmile, I only replied, that, as far as related to myſelf, I was obliged by her good opinion, though I found an inſurmountable reluctance to involve myſelf in thoſe delicate diſtinctions, which appeared to me difficult to reconcile with ſtrict principle.

"Ah, that old-faſhioned prejudice in fa-

vour of ſtrict principle," ſhe cried, "is the very thing I want to root out, as the prime origin of all illiberality."

Lady Belfont and my mother came in, and took the part of principle, in a way that left poor Lady Frances's favourite doctrine of ſentimental liberality very threadbare indeed. You will be much pleaſed with the whole converſation, which I reſerve for a greater command of time than friendly aſſiduity at preſent leaves me. One thing, however, I muſt mention, whilſt yet ſtrong in my mind, as it is upon a ſubject I have often heard you diſcuſs.

Lady Frances, in the courſe of the argument, quoted Monſieur de Wolmar, in Rouſſeau's Eloiſe, as an inſtance of friendſhip and confidence in the love of a wife. This recalled to my mind what Madame de Sainval had ſaid in favour of that book *, which I repeated as well as I could recollect it, appealing to Lady Belfont and my mother for their opinion upon her judgment of it.

Lady Belfont ſaid, ſhe would not attempt

* See Vol. II, p. 295.

to controvert a fact. The impreſſion Madame de Sainval received, perhaps aroſe from the very circumſtance of her being at that moment under the dominion of powerful paſſion, working upon an honeſt heart; a ſituation ſufficiently ſimilar to that of Eloiſe, to carry her deep into the minute touches of guilty conſciouſneſs, that characteriſe the letters written during her deviation from virtue, and which form a marked contraſt to the tranquillity of mind that pervades her ſubſequent correſpondence, in conſequence of the ſacrifice made to duty; both of which certainly inculcate a ſtrong moral leſſon, overlooked by the generality of readers in their eagerneſs for ſtory, and enthuſiaſm for diſaſtrous love. One inſtance of this kind, however, or indeed half a dozen, would go but a little way to counterbalance the numerous proofs that might be adduced of a contrary effect. "Where the morality lies ſo deep, therefore, as to reveal itſelf only to the *diſcerning few*, and the dangerous example is varniſhed over with eloquence and attractions to dazzle the *ſuperficial many*, I have no heſitation to aſſert, that the book had better never have been written."

Lady Frances contended ſtrenuouſly for the good *intentions* of Rouſſeau, and was perfectly ſure that every ſingle woman, who read it attentively, would reap the ſame benefit with Madame de Sainval.

"It does not, however, appear from the preface, that it was for *them* he meant it," my mother ſaid; "ſo that even admitting the fact, it did him no credit."

"The ſacredneſs of the conjugal band is enforced in the moſt impreſſive manner," continued Lady Frances; "no palliation of matrimonial lapſes, on the contrary, without a ſhadow of love for her huſband, the moſt perfect domeſtic felicity is made to ariſe out of the ſacrifice of her tendereſt affections. Can any moral be more ſtrongly pointed?"

"If it were not wholly invalidated by the laſt letter, in which ſhe avows that ſhe never was happy a moment," replied Lady Belfont.

"Then the death bed ſcene!" cried Lady Frances. "How incontrovertibly does it eſtabliſh the truth of her religious perſuaſion."

"And yet, if intended for the converſion of atheiſts, how does the leſſon ſtop ſhort of

its effect for want of Wolmar's acknowledgment of its operation upon his principles? In ſhort I muſt ſay with Pope, 'at beſt 'tis but a contradiction ſtill."

My mother was clearly of opinion that Rouſſeau merely wrote under the impreſſion of the moment, and without any conſideration whatever of the moral tendency of his work. He has given unbounded ſcope to his eloquence, and, in pourtraying his own irregular feelings, believed that he was repreſenting nature.

The argument was ſummed up by Lady Belfont, with this obſervation; "that to fortify morals at the expenſe of ſullying the purity of a female mind, was a price which a *virtuous woman* need not pay, and from which a *vicious woman* was not likely to reap benefit, whilſt counteracted by a picture ſo ſeducing of a fallen angel."

And thus did Rouſſeau paſs condemnation, even at the lenient hands of Lady Belfont; and your Louiſa ſee cauſe to exult in her ſteady adherence to her mother's injunctions, in defiance of the temptation held out by the ſanction of Madame de Sainval's example.

The beauty of this afternoon tempted Lord Belfont to propoſe drinking tea at a farm he has a few miles off, which commands a view that appears to particular advantage with the ſetting ſun. The whole party acceded, except Mr. Stanville, who ſaid one of his phaeton horſes was diſabled, and Lady Frances, who proteſted againſt a general deſertion of the poor cripple, and laid claim to a promiſe made by Mr. Stanville, of reading Oſſian to us.

We made our little eſtabliſhment under a lime tree, to the left of the lawn. With our work and his book, a couple of hours paſſed moſt enjoyably indeed. You cannot imagine the addition that his fine toned voice, and feeling ſoul, make to the ſimple ſublimity of the poet.

We were interrupted by Lady Frances being called away.

Mr. Stanville and I remained alone, for the firſt time, ſince my accident. He fixed his eyes upon my face, apparently eager, yet embarraſſed for utterance. I tried to conceal my own embaraſſment, by keeping my head down cloſe upon my work.

"Is that work ſo very intereſting?" he at

laſt ſaid, " as not to allow Miſs Riverſdale leiſure to beſtow one forgiving glance, to alleviate my regret at having cauſed her ſo much ſuffering."

" Far from being the cauſe, it is, on the contrary, to your aſſiſtance, Mr. Stanville, that I am indebted for ſaving me from the more ſerious conſequences, which the continuance of a fainting fit, upon the damp ground, might have produced. I owe you an apology for the tardy acknowledgment, and am to this moment at a loſs to account for your coming ſo ſpeedily to my aid."

" The ſhriek you uttered reached my heart, when I believe no other human ſound could have made an impreſſion upon my ear —it recalled me from a ſtate of deſperation. —I could not miſtake the ſpot from which it proceeded—I found you inſenſible, and dared to take you in my arms——"

He ſtopped—I could not ſpeak—

At length, " Little indeed did I imagine —little could I have dared to hope that concern for me had any ſhare.——O, Miſs Riverſdale! Forgive my preſumption!—That one happy inſtant which betrayed your intereſt in my fate"——He pauſed.

"My intereſt! . . . Upon ſo alarming an occaſion—was no more than Lady Belfont's brother" . . . I could not articulate another word, and trembled to a degree that obliged me to deſiſt from work.

"Miſs Riverſdale!—beloved, adored Miſs Riverſdale, do not interpoſe a chilling ſecond cauſe, between feelings ſo enchanting and their enraptured object!—Louiſa!—My ſoul's Louiſa!—I ſee, I feel you love me!—Your angelic candour is above diſguiſe—My own cruelly perplexed ſituation has alone debarred me from obtaining the avowal of a bliſs ſo tranſcendant.—But away with all reſerves!—Louiſa ſhall know—Louiſa alone ſhall determine!—I will acknowledge—" and he fell at my feet.—"O God, how can I?—how dare I inſult her angelic purity with my guilty acknowledgments?——".

I ſtarted—I could not command myſelf at the moment; and he remained checked and abaſhed, with his face concealed in his hands.

Recollecting myſelf, I endeavoured to raiſe him.

"No!—no—let me remain in this humble poſture—unworthy even of ſuch an indul-

gence.—Your generoſity—your heavenly generoſity can alone acquit me—But by all that's ſacred I know not how to appeal to it.——"

An idea ſhot acroſs my brain, which reſtored me to a degree of ſelf-poſſeſſion. "I inſiſt upon your riſing, Mr. Stanville," I ſaid.

I believe the ſenſe of offended delicacy gave authority to my tone, for he did not attempt any farther reſiſtance; but riſing, ſtood confounded. The expreſſions that had fallen from him, Henry, had ſuggeſted the hateful word *libertine* to my thoughts, and ſeemed at once to have cloſed my heart againſt him; I could not utter another word.

At length he exclaimed in agony, "The altered tone of your voice, Miſs Riverſdale, freezes my very blood—but ſuſpend, O! ſuſpend your judgment.—I cannot explain—By Heaven I cannot! Yet I conjure you not to deſpiſe me! Mrs. Blandford ſhall tell you all—from your award I will not appeal—but do not condemn me unheard!—Do not drive me to a ſecond fit of diſtraction—"

The return of Lady Frances checked any

thing farther; and ſhe was almoſt immediately followed by the reſt of the party.

Mr. Stanville diſappeared, and I retired earlier than uſual, unable wholly to conceal the diſturbance of my mind.

After paſſing a ſleepleſs night, I have endeavoured to beguile time by writing to you until the hour after breakfaſt, in which Mrs. Blandford has ſent to ſpeak to me.

It is at hand—I do not attempt to deſcribe the ſtate I am in—You can too well gueſs it.

Three o'clock.—O no, Henry! deareſt Henry! Mr. Stanville is *not* a libertine!—

But all is at an end for your Louiſa!—

You know it well, my beſt friend, that all is over.—You know *his ſtory*, it ſeems—*and you know me.*—Never could I purchaſe happineſs at ſuch an expenſe!

Artleſs! unhappy Agathe! Yours he is, and yours muſt the ill-fated Louiſa confirm him. Merciful Heaven!—What a taſk?—

I muſt have recourſe for ſupport to Lady Mary Malcolm, and ſhall truſt to the reward

of my mother's approbation when it is over: but I ſtand in need of tender, friendly ſoothings, and impartial counſel, which my mother's prepoſſeſſions could not afford me; and upon this occaſion delicacy precludes Lady Belfont.

Of the gentle, liberal, dignified mind of Mrs. Blandford, I can ſcarce give you an idea. Participating too deeply in Mr. Stanville's diſtreſs, however, to be quite juſt to the claims of Agathe perhaps, and kindly biaſſed in my favour, ſhe thinks I alone could make him happy—at leaſt ſhe is of opinion, that, compelling him to fulfil his engagement, is dooming him to certain miſery. She cautioned me to weigh well what I did, before I puſhed, a perhaps overſtrained point of honour, to the ſacrifice of two people's happineſs, for the doubtful reſcue of one. She knows my will muſt be his law. Never was man devoted to woman, as ſhe ſays Mr. Stanville is to me. How flattering!—yet how diſtreſſing!——

Our converſation was long—very long.—I had great difficulty to bear up under parts of it; but ſhe was ſo compaſſionate—ſo good—

Mr. Stanville had requeſted to be admit-

ted, the moment Mrs. Blandford ſhould leave me, and before my mother's return from her airing; but I was wholly unfit for it—ſome hours at leaſt are requiſite to reſtore me to ſufficient compoſure. Mrs. Blandford adviſed me to conſult with Lady Mary Malcolm, as ſhe felt herſelf too much a party concerned, ſhe ſaid, to be impartial; and to morrow, during my mother's airing, my interview is to take place with Mr. Stanville; and at her return, I truſt I ſhall give her cauſe to be ſatisfied with her daughter. Mrs. Blandford will make a point of Mr. Stanville's abſence this day, to give me a better chance of acquiring the neceſſary firmneſs—

Little did I think, in ſtating my hopes, fears, uncertainties, to my beloved brother, that he himſelf was the choſen confident of Mr. Stanville. O! that the fleet might now arrive! What ſupport ſhould I not derive from your letters! How forcibly will they point out to me what to do, and ſupply me with ſtrength to do it.

I have converſed with Lady Mary Malcolm, my dear brother, and I am armed—

I think I am armed with reaſons irreſiſtible, and firmneſs to urge them—

What afterward becomes of me, matters little, I ſhall have done my duty.

Three days are paſt ſince the diſtreſſing morning in which I undertook to deſtroy every ſhadow of happineſs this life could afford me.

I am now I think ſufficiently collected to repeat to you what paſſed—Not one ſyllable of it can ever be eraſed from my memory.

As the carriage drove from the door with my mother, Mrs. Blandford conducted him into the library, which adjoins to my preſent bed room; where I was already ſeated in expectation of him.

With looks ſuch as you may conceive he walked forward to the chimney, againſt which he leaned, as if all power of ſpeech or motion were denied him.

"I could wiſh to leave the room," ſaid Mrs. Blandford in a low voice to me, "if you feel yourſelf equal to this trying ſcene unaſſiſted; I know I ſhould relieve him by it."

I bowed assent; and she went.

He seemed unconscious of it at the moment: at length, casting his eyes around, he advanced precipitately, and knelt before me.

"I await my life or death at your hands, Miss Riversdale—"

"I am in a very trying predicament, Mr. Stanville," hesitatingly; "but I have no choice left me in the line of conduct to be pursued—"

"Do you mean that you act under influence?" interrupting me impetuously. "By Heaven I'll bow to none but yours?"

"Under the influence of reason, and of honour only, Mr. Stanville: I hope I need no monitor to enforce their dictates.—" I trembled so much, that I could not proceed.

"O God of heaven! I foretal my doom!" and his head sank upon the sofa on which I sat.

With an effort for more composure, I added, "To one so perfectly conscious of what those dictates must be, it can require little of argument—but *example* may perhaps facilitate your task, and *that* I am prepared to set you."

"Example!" looking up wildly.

Aware that he misconceived my meaning, and dreading the effect upon him of a renewed apprehension of Sir George Rutland, I hastened to explain myself. "I will candidly avow, Mr. Stanville, that the sacrifice to which I allude falls little short of that to which I must urge you.—I do *not* mean the sacrifice of my hand to another, for that is beyond my power—but the sacrifice of *my* preference for *you*, to *your* duty."

"Louisa!—Mistress of my soul!—My only love!—And do you avow your preference only to drive me the more imperiously from you?"

"I avow it, to prove to you the strong sense I have of the obligations you have incurred."

"And how can you require of me *that* of which you have declared yourself incapable? to devote your hand to one, while you condescend to say your affection is another's."

"*Your* strength, Mr. Stanville, must arise out of the ties you have contracted."

"O! Miss Riversdale, I am sunk in your eyes; you despise me!"

"My task would be easier if I did."

"Was ever man so circumstanced!—To be assured of a preference!—To be beloved—Did you say love, Louisa? *My* Louisa!—O let me call you *my* Louisa!—Candid, angelic woman!—Repeat to me!—Let me hear the inspiring words, *I love you*, from those lips!"—and he seized both my hands, as he still knelt before me, gazing upon me with an earnestness that seemed to unsettle every purpose of my soul.

"You distress me exceedingly, Mr. Stanville, and, by the repetition which you urge, almost stagger me as to the propriety of the avowal which sincerity has prompted."

"By all that's sacred no other motive could impart the resolution you require. Convinced of Louisa's love, I could do—O! what could I *not* do? What could be difficult to a soul inspired by the energy of virtue itself!—Deign, my Louisa!—deign to utter to me the enchanting sounds—they will recur to me in every emergence!—they will buoy me up to deserve the glorious meed.—Do not leave your work unfinished!—You call for a great sacrifice—enable me to accomplish it."

"What would you have me ſay, Mr. Stanville?"

"Call me Charles!—Do not, my Louiſa, throw me at a diſtance by that chilling repetition of my name!—Call me Charles!—Surely the pureſt friendſhip would ſanction that appellation. *Your Charles*, call me—"

"*My* Charles then muſt juſtify my compliance, by proving himſelf the ſuperiour being, ſuch confidential treatment implies."

His face had ſunk upon my hands; I felt them wet with tears. I was agitated beyond ſpeech.

Finding him continue in the ſame poſture, and his frame convulſed with the violence of his feelings, I at length made a forcible effort to raiſe him, ſaying, "Charles, I now call upon you for the firmneſs I am entitled to expect.—I inſiſt upon your riſing, and evincing the reſolution you have promiſed."

"Not, Louiſa, until you have uttered thoſe bleſſed words."

"Alas! have I not more than uttered them, in thus weakly giving way to your unreaſonableneſs?"

"Mere compaſſion might prompt that,

but ſuch an undeniable proof of your eſteem, of your reliance upon my honour, would raiſe me above myſelf. Indulge me, my heart's Louiſa! You ſhall not—indeed you ſhall not repent it!—"

The ſpirit of integrity ſeemed to breathe from his lips, and irradiate his countenance—it overpowered every motive of reſiſtance. In retracing the ſcene, I fear you muſt think me inexcuſable—but indeed, my brother, there was a virtuous enthuſiaſm in his perſuaſions which compelled me to confide—and I uttered the words he prompted.

He claſped his hands in emphatic ſilence.

I could not look up.

"And have my ears drank in the extatic ſound?" he at length exclaimed. "Never—never will they ceaſe to vibrate on my heart." He aroſe with greater calmneſs. "Now, Louiſa, mould me to your will!"

Henry! do not deſpiſe me!—I no longer knew what it was.

I heſitated—Too much appeared at that inſtant to be at ſtake.—My fiat was to fix his fate: I had wiſhed to convince—not to compel him.

"Angelic woman! Propitious be your

heſitation!" he exclaimed. "Weigh well the reſponſibility you are about to take upon you! The wretchedneſs for life of *three* human beings now hangs upon your lips—"

"Of *three!*" I exclaimed, ſtartled at the ſolemn admonition.

"Too ſurely of three," he replied, "If the unhappy girl, to whoſe claim you now deem every other conſideration ſubſervient, has delicacy of mind to merit the ſacrifice of ſuch a lot as Louiſa's love would enſure to me, muſt not that very delicacy prevent her deriving happineſs, from being united to a man whoſe tendereſt feelings are alienated?"

"O, Charles!" I cried, ſtaggered, terrified, and ſcarce knowing what I ſaid, "*your* wife! and *wretched!*—Impoſſible—"

"Adorable Louiſa!" again rapturouſly throwing himſelf at my feet, and encircling me with his arms, "my heart's own Louiſa! —how inconteſtibly mine does this enchanting, involuntary confeſſion make you!—By Heaven I never can—I never will—"

"Huſh!" I ſcreamed impetuouſly, almoſt diſtracted with the contrary ſenſations that tortured my breaſt, and feeling myſelf deviating ſo widely from what I had undertaken,

and what an imperious voice ſtill ſo ſtrongly enforced, "Huſh, Mr. Stanville, for mercy! and as you value my future peace, ſtop your raſh vow! Give me one inſtant's time for recollection—You hurry me out of my ſenſes—indeed you do—My head is unequal to ſuch a conflict as this—" and I held it with both my hands—it throbbed as if ready to burſt.

I ſuppoſe my looks confirmed the reality of my diſorder—for he gazed wildly at me, and was ſilent.

After ſeveral minutes of a fruitleſs attempt to recover ſome compoſure, I requeſted he would leave me to myſelf for a half hour.

"To *yourſelf*, Miſs Riverſdale—forgive me if I venture to make a condition in my obedience; to *yourſelf* only. Not to have recourſe to *any other* interference—to the ſuggeſtions of indifference, however friendly—in a caſe where *our individual happineſs* is *alone* at ſtake, *we only* can determine how far virtue will compenſate the ſacrifices ſhe prompts."

"We are not, I believe, at this moment either of us capable of judging reaſonably—but perhaps half an hour's recollection may recover me; and during that time I will

promiſe you not to have recourſe to any, but that ſupreme, unerring guide, to whom I never yet appealed in vain—"

He made ſome anſwer, which was not articulate, and retired with apparent reluctance into the breakfaſt parlour; of which he put to, the door, without turning the lock.

I fell upon my knees, and poured forth my ſoul in ardent prayer for ſupport and ſteadineſs.

I ſoon recovered calmneſs ſufficient to revolve what had paſſed. Unprepared for the obſervation of the ſmall probability there was of Agathe's happineſs being ſecured by the ſacrifice I urged, it had made an impreſſion beyond what it ought. The faſcination of Mr. Stanville's preſence could have alone clouded my perception of this fallacious ſubſtitution of ſentiment to principle. The atonement due was not only to Agathe, but to her innocent offſpring—it was to this point, from which there can be no appeal, that Lady Mary Malcolm had ſo entirely turned my mind, that I believed no power could have removed the ſtrong impreſſion which the influence of paſſion, however, had ſo nearly obliterated—

I ſhuddered at the thought—the unequivocal ſenſe of right, reaſſumed its empire, and finding myſelf ſtrengthened beyond my hopes, I haſtened to avail myſelf of the important moment, long before the time which I had requeſted was elapſed.

Mr. Stanville flew at the ſound of my voice, but affected probably with the change in the expreſſion of my countenance, he ſtood as if awe ſtruck before me.

In a calm, though low voice, I pointed out to him the fallacy by which we had nearly ſuffered ourſelves to be miſled.

He turned extremely pale, and did not—perhaps could not, anſwer. Staggering to the ſofa, he ſeated himſelf by me. After a pauſe of evident ſtruggle to ſubdue himſelf, he at length mournfully ejaculated, "Here then end all my hopes!—In one ſhort hour have I been raiſed to the ſummit of felicity, and ſunk to the very depth of deſpair!—Miſs Riverſdale has avowed her love, only to exclude me from her preſence for ever!"

"My love might certainly have been confined to my own breaſt, Mr. Stanville, had not ſtrong motives prompted its avowal. Aware that the variations in your conduct

have produced inconſiſtencies in mine, that require to be vindicated from the odious aſperſion of having trifled with your peace for the gratification of my own vanity, my beſt defence certainly reſts upon a confeſſion of the plain truth; and I am confirmed in the honeſt propriety of this deviation from the common rules of decorum, by the hope that you will be compelled to emulate the example of energy, which a ſtrong ſenſe of right could alone infuſe into the mind of a weak woman. Sincerity farther compels me to add, that I devote the remainder of my life to the claims of friendſhip: it will take ſome time to reſtore me to the ſenſe of its bleſſings. My firſt object muſt be to endeavour to ſubdue feelings, which, having proved ineffectual for your happineſs, can never be transferred."

His tears now again flowed apace, and he cried, "Generous, noble-minded Louiſa! and will you devote yourſelf to a life of ſingleneſs for *my* ſake?"

"For the ſake of that integrity by which I hope to be ever guided, Mr. Stanville. I would not put it into the power of any man to interfere with a ſentiment, which, under

due regulation, I ſhall always glory in placing before every other."

"Tranſcendant woman! Friend of my ſoul! and why may not I too devote myſelf to a ſingle life, and cultivate the purity of ſuch a tie as this? Louiſa's *friendſhip!*—What woman's love could come into competition—bleſſed with that, the enthuſiaſm of virtue would inſpire my every thought—"

"Its firſt effort muſt be to bend you to the fulfilment of an obligation, from which no earthly conſideration can liberate you."

"In time, my adored friend, you would bring me to think ſo—might I but for awhile be left at liberty—might I now but be allowed free acceſs to that mild, judicious ſenſe, which adds ſuch ireſiſtible energy—"

LADY RIVERSDALE TO SIR HENRY RIVERSDALE,

(Encloſing the foregoing.)

The information that an expreſs ſhip will ſail in a few days, offers an opportunity of diſpatching the encloſed, which, though unfiniſhed, Louiſa has deſired me to make up,

and forward. She is not very well; but do not be alarmed, my dear ſon; ſhe has made an effort ſo honourable, upon motives ſo praiſeworthy, that ſhe will be ſupported under the trial. She became faint whilſt writing to you. She had kept her bed for three days before, with a ſevere nervous headach and low fever, accompanied with fainting fits. She appeared better on Monday, and inſiſted upon getting up to write to you. The exertion proved too great. Flora providentially went into the room, and juſt ſaved her from falling. It is now a week ſince, but we cannot admit of her reſuming the pen for the preſent. The ſprain in the ancle is almoſt well. She is low from bodily exhauſtion; but her mild, pious reſignation, enables her to converſe calmly, and at times even cheerfully. Her ſucceſs with Mr. Stanville has been complete. He agreed to proceed to the ſouth of France without delay, and make the only atonement in his power to the unhappy victim of his—irregularities, to uſe no harſher name.

Louiſa believes him gone; but he awaits in London the news of her perfect recovery before he proceeds.

I have perhaps hitherto, my ſon, not quite done Mr. Stanville juſtice. He is aſſuredly a man of greater feeling than reſolution; and this accounts for an inconſiſtency of conduct, which I attributed to want of principle, but which may, perhaps, more properly be aſcribed to the want of that great ſteadier of all principle, Religion. He is ſtruck with the firmneſs and ſincerity of your ſiſter's faith, and candidly expreſſed an earneſt wiſh that he likewiſe *could believe*. "Might he ſtate his difficulties by letter to Louiſa? her arguments would derive additional ſtrength from his anxious deſire to aſſimilate his way of thinking to hers upon every ſubject." I was inclined to conſider this as a mere pretence to draw her into a correſpondence; but Lady Mary Malcolm, who has acquired a deep inſight into them both, engages for the ſincere purity of their attachment, thinks this will prove ſupporting and ſoothing to their honeſt diſintereſted minds. Lady Mary has gained an extraordinary aſcendancy over Louiſa; and perhaps judges rightly, that where there is ſound principle and ſolid ſenſe, more may be obtained in proceſs of time by ſoothing, than by reſiſt-

ing the ſtrong impreſſion of the moment. Upon this ground, that oppoſition calls up all the powers of argument in ſupport of the favourite hypotheſis, and certainly tends not only to confirm the arguer in it, but to create a jealous abidance by it; whereas by a little conceſſion you take the chance of bringing forward gratitude, and generoſity, at a future period, to aſſiſt in ſubduing thoſe reaſons that time will weaken, when they have not been converted into a ſtandard of conſiſtency. She has not the ſmalleſt doubt of Louiſa being at length brought round to do juſtice to Sir George Rutland. Perhaps ſo. I may be too perſeveringly rigid in what I deem right. I have ſubmitted in this inſtance to her judgment. Sir George Rutland has left Thorp Caſtle, and the correſpondence is acceded to, with only the condition of the letters going open through Lady Belfont's hands; to which Mr. Stanville made no objection, provided the arguments uſed by Miſs Riverſdale were wholly her own. Separated from her on earth, the only conſolation that could bear him up, he ſaid, would be the proſpect of a reunion be-

yond it; and with that hope ſhe alone can inſpire him.

Satisfy yourſelf, my dear Henry, that a ſhort time will reſtore our darling to health and ſerenity, and perhaps fairer proſpects than *I* ſhould foreſee, in the poſſible completion of her preſent wiſhes. Sir George Rutland is a man of religious and ſtrictly virtuous principles; the ſureſt foundations for permanent conjugal felicity, without doubt.

I ſhall write more at length, with the packet I have to forward to you, of your ſiſter's deſcriptive journal, which remains to go by the fleet; at preſent I only wiſh to ſet your heart at reſt in regard to her. She has been urgent to obtain my promiſe of being allowed to remain ſingle. I have endeavoured to ſatisfy her, without tying myſelf poſitively down, by the aſſurance that ſhe ſhould never be urged beyond the concurrence of her own judgment.

You know by whom ſhe is here ſurrounded, and how beloved; you can therefore have little reaſon to fear the continuance of her preſent unhappineſs, or any laſting injury from it to her health.

Farewel, my beloved ſon! Impatiently indeed do we look for the arrival of the India ſhips. The accounts of your ſafety will be a reviving cordial to Louiſa's ſpirits, and your arguments will have more weight than all ours put together. When you recollect that the *all* includes Lady Mary Malcolm, Lady Belfont, Mrs. Blandford, and Madam de Sainval (whoſe letters concur ſtrongly with all our wiſhes), you will form an adequate conception of your ſiſter's love and deference for you: of mine I do not attempt to give you an idea, farther than it is ſummed up in the comprehenſive and literal aſſertion, that I am your moſt affectionate mother,

C. RIVERSDALE.

Thorp Caſtle.

CONTINUATION BY THE EDITOR.

Alas! the India fleet, ſo impatiently looked for, brought the heavieſt addition that could be made to the diſtreſs of the unhappy Louiſa, in the afflicting intelligence that Sir Henry Riverſdale had fallen a victim to the deſtructive climate, ſhortly after his arrival. Her nerves, already ſeverely ſhaken, gave

way to this unexpected ſtroke, and ſhe continued ſeveral months in a ſtate of deſpondence, from which her being ever again aroused, appeared extremely doubtful.

The ſtrong mind of Lady Riverſdale bore up under this, as it had done under former misfortunes: the ſituation of her daughter called for exertions, which drew her out of her own grief.

When Miſs Riverſdale at length recovered ſo far, as to expreſs a choice in any propoſed plan with regard to a place of reſidence, ſhe only objected to London; every other ſpot was indifferent to her. The narrow circumſtances in which they were now likely to continue, induced Lady Riverſdale, in compliance with her daughter's preference for the country, to think of ſome retired ſpot in Wales. Mrs. Blandford, however, propoſed an alternative, which Lady Riverſdale was at length prevailed upon to accept; a neat cottage, adjoining to her park, which had become vacant by the death of an aunt, for whom ſhe had taken pleaſure in fitting it up, might, ſhe urged to Lady Riverſdale, afford more or leſs retirement, as Louiſa's recovery ſhould in the ſequel admit of it. By

greatly underrating the rent, she contrived to remove the chief impediment to this arrangement, and gratify her own friendship and Lady Riversdale's delicacy, who would upon no account have consented to occupy it rent free; and hither the mourners removed, when Lord and Lady Belfont left Thorp Castle in February.

The only object that seemed to retain a hold upon Miss Riversdale's mind, was the correspondence with Mr. Stanville; of which a few letters still exist, but of a cast too serious and solemn to find their place with propriety in a publication, to which a more novel-like form has throughout been given: this solicitude for the conviction of Mr. Stanville, was at length productive of consequences beneficial to herself. By seeking to place religious truths and consolation in their strongest points of view, she gradually felt their influence; and with the returning spring Lady Riversdale and Mrs. Blandford endeavoured to give an interest also to the exercise prescribed for her health, by throwing objects of charity, as if by chance, in her way, and succeeded in once more awakening her feelings to the purest of all gratifica-

tions, that of doing good. Limited, however, in the means of affording pecuniary aſſiſtance, Miſs Riverſdale adopted the more effectual plan of working for the poor parents, and inſtructing the children. This object ſoon engroſſed her mind, and afforded a ſtrong proof that a rational *purſuit* is the great reſtorer, as well as ſupporter of happineſs in life.

Sir George Rutland, informed by Lady Frances Ruthen of what had paſſed between Miſs Riverſdale and Mr. Stanville, as well as of Lady Riverſdale's evaſion of the promiſe her daughter had ſo earneſtly requeſted of being permitted to remain ſingle, determined, unequivocally, to relinquiſh pretenſions ſo diſtreſſing to her, by quitting England; and in the moſt delicate manner imparted to Lady Riverſdale his reſolution to continue abroad, until he ſhould find himſelf enabled to meet the object of his admiration with the *eſteem* only that might entitle him to the enjoyment of her ſociety, which would ever conſtitute his chief felicity; and to Lord Belfont he communicated (under a ſtrict injunction of ſecrecy) a will, made before his departure, by which he bequeathed to Miſs

Riverſdale all the unentailed part of his property, amounting to thirty thouſand pounds.

Botany alſo reſumed, by degrees, ſome little intereſt in Miſs Riverſdale's mind. Mrs. Blandford, with the moſt attentive and unremitting zeal, ſtudied to adapt herſelf to the very ſerious caſt of her friend's thoughts; and had at length obtained the ſatisfaction to hear her declare, that ſhe experienced an inward tranquillity in her preſent mode of life, which enabled her to await, without impatience, the period which was to reunite her to the objects of her affection, in the regions where change and ſeparation would be no more.

Months paſſed on, and the only viſible trace of grief that ſtill appeared to linger about Miſs Riverſdale, was her ſteady reſiſtance of every attempt to draw her out of her ſolitude, or introduce viſitors into it, Lady Belfont alone excepted, who had made it her road to Thorp Caſtle, with a view to perſuade her to accompany Lady Riverſdale and Mrs. Blandford thither. Louiſa ſtrenuouſly urged them to go, but excuſed herſelf, upon the plea of not chooſing to deſert her young charges.

The firſt beam of pleaſure that again brightened the eyes of Miſs Riverſdale, was reflected from a paragraph in a letter from Madame de Sainval. Mrs. Blandford and Lady Riverſdale exchanged a congratulatory look, and Louiſa read aloud, that Madame de Sainval was preparing to pay her friend a viſit, accompanied by the Marquis, who profeſſed no longer to know happineſs but in his wife's preſence. "The ſight of our felicity, and the conſciouſneſs of being the author of it, muſt create enjoyment in a heart ſo feeling and ſo good (added Madame de Sainval), and we ſhall make the experiment very ſhortly, after the receipt of this letter."

A glow of ſatisfaction overſpread the lovely countenance of Louiſa, as ſhe obſerved "it were indeed ingratitude to be inſenſible to the bleſſing of having reſtored joy to hearts ſuch as theſe."

The buſineſs of preparing for the reception of this dear friend, prolonged the ſenſation of pleaſure that had been arouſed by the intimation of the viſit. Lady Riverſdale inſiſted upon giving up her bedchamber, and little ſitting room adjoining, to the Marquis

and Marchioneſs, and accepted of an apartment offered by Mrs. Blandford at the hall, in the hope that the uninterrupted intercourſe with a young, lively, and happy friend, might have the more ſpeedy effect.

For a few days after the arrival of Monſieur and Madame de Sainval, the exhilaration of Miſs Riverſdale's ſpirits encouraged the hope that ſhe would recover her former cheerfulneſs; but as the novelty ſubſided, the effect wore off. The happineſs of the Marchioneſs produced in her a turbulent gayety, ill ſuited to Louiſa's quieſcent ſtate. The conſtant effort to amuſe, by laughter and talk, at length became ſo wearying, that ſhe confeſſed to Mrs. Blandford it was a real relief when the acceptance of an invitation from Lady Belfont, to the Marquis and Marchioneſs, to paſs a month at Thorp Caſtle, again reſtored to the cottage its wonted quiet. Mrs. Blandford accompanied them; and Louiſa, in the grave ſociety of her aged parent, found more unqualified ſatisfaction in *reflecting* upon her *friend's happineſs*, than ſhe had done in being *eye-witneſs* to *it*, and confirmed from experience the juſtneſs of the aſſertion, "that our own

mind only affords the meaſure of joy or grief, in which we *can* ſympathiſe with a friend *."

In little more than a fortnight Mrs. Blandford unexpectedly returned.

"You expreſs no ſurpriſe to ſee me!" ſhe ſaid to Louiſa, who received her with ſerenity and ſweetneſs, but aſked no queſtions. The breaſt muſt be greatly at eaſe, that is much alive to the impulſe of curioſity.

"I hope no unpleaſant event has ſhortened your intended ſtay," was the anſwer.

"The very contrary," ſaid Mrs. Blandford, with a look fraught with meaning; and after a moment's pauſe, "Lady Belfont has for ſome time been in daily expectation of the return of her brother—"

The feelings of Miſs Riverſdale were now indeed aroufed to a keenneſs long unknown. The variations of her colour interpreted a ſilence which ſhe found it almoſt impoſſible to break—

Mrs. Blandford haſtened to relieve her

* See Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiment, Article SYMPATHY.

emotion, yet with a caution, prompted by the fear of overpowering her with the tidings she came to impart.

"We were all made happy yesterday by his safe arrival;" she continued, "and I am deputed to call for our beloved Louisa's participation in our joy."

"Thank you, dear Mrs. Blandford, for making me a partaker in it," she faintly uttered. "Assuredly to hear of Mr. Stanville's happiness, has long been a part of my daily petition to Heaven—tell him—"

"He lays claim to the greetings of friendship from your own lips, Louisa; he requests admittance to pour forth his thanks for the unequivocal testimony of esteem and regard evinced by your letters—"

"Not just yet! dear Mrs. Blandford—not just yet," scarce able to articulate, and the tremor increasing to an alarming degree.

"Compose yourself, my love!" holding her salts to her, "compose yourself; you shall take your own time."

"I am very much ashamed of my weakness," Miss Riversdale said, as she recovered. "I did hope I had conquered all danger of emotions such as these, but I find

my ſpirits ſtill unequal to any ſurpriſe; and aſſuredly until I can acquire a more effectual control over them, you will agree with me that it would be highly improper I ſhould ſee Mr. Stanville."

"Your firmneſs will be ſhaken whenever an interview does take place; Mr. Stanville cannot be expected to be wholly free from emotion himſelf—"

"Mr. Stanville's ſentiments," interrupted Louiſa, "have of neceſſity undergone a change ſo great ſince we parted!—his affections muſt now hold a courſe ſo different!—"

"I ſhould apprehend, that a heart once devoted to Louiſa would not be very likely to admit a ſuperiour claim—"

"My dear friend!" again interrupted Miſs Riverſdale, "do not recal viſionary diſtinctions, imbibed, imperceptibly perhaps, from Lady Frances Ruthen's ſlighty maxims. The ſober tints of ſorrow, ſuch as mine, reſtore objects to their true light. I have ſeen the fallacy of thoſe diſcriminations, by which my too highly wrought fancy had lulled my better reaſon into dreams of happineſs that never can be realiſed—confidential

friendly intercourſe with a married man, who has both experienced and inſpired ſentiments of a different nature, could only be indulged—even allowing that it might preſerve its purity—could only be indulged at the expenſe of violating all thoſe decorums of which the world is entitled to enforce the regard."

"Do you imagine, Louiſa, that I ſhould be the perſon to urge an intercourſe that might expoſe your fair fame to obloquy?—Will you not truſt Lady Belfont?—Madame de Sainval?—to decide upon the propriety of admitting Mr. Stanville to an interview?—"

"And do you?—do they?—I am confounded—and indeed I fear you all think more highly of me than I at this moment feel ſo deſerve—Yet ſtill there is another perſon," heſitatingly, "whoſe opinion ought to take place of all.—Has *ſhe* been informed?—Can ſhe approve?—"

"Did not Mr. Stanville tell you long ago, Louiſa?" ſaid Mrs. Blandford, evading the queſtion, "that he ſhould never acknowledge a juriſdiction in preference to yours?—"

"Mr. Stanville ſpoke from his heart when he ſaid ſo, Mrs. Blandford; but the

ties he has ſince contracted muſt of neceſſity place things in a light ſo different.—"

"If I know Mr. Stanville, nothing will ever interfere with the deference and reſpect he has vowed to you, Louiſa."

"Could I diſbelieve my eyes, I ſhould ſay it was Lady Frances Ruthen, and not Mrs. Blandford, who held this language."

"Lady Frances Ruthen—Lady Belfont—Madame de Sainval—Mrs. Blandford—are all unanimous as to this point—"

"What may it mean?—You muſt ſurely be all right, and I am under ſome deluſion!—For pity's ſake explain."

"Let us take a turn in the garden, Louiſa, the freſh air will aſſiſt to compoſe your ſpirits; and there you will find Lady Riverſdale, who will come to your aid if you fear to be miſled by our ſophiſtications."

"Alas! Mrs. Blandford, my fear is, that I rather wiſh to hear the 'worſe made the better reaſon;' for I ſhrink from an appeal to my mother."

"And what if Lady Riverſdale were againſt you?"

"Then indeed I muſt ſubmit blindfold."

"The devoted victim of filial obedience

—doomed to happineſs ſupreme," with a ſmile.

"My dear Mrs. Blandford, do I dream? I do not recogniſe you in one word of this extraordinary diſcuſſion; is it *you* who can ſmile at principles ſo painfully adhered to? who can ſport with feelings ſo acute?—"

"The return of Mr. Stanville has elevated me above myſelf, Louiſa; I know not what I ſay.—"

And thus did this ſenſible, judicious woman, prolong and wind about the unſettled thoughts of Miſs Riverſdale, till ſhe gradually brought her ſpirits to ſome degree of preparation for the important news ſhe brought; which finally was, that Mr. Stanville was returned, honourably liberated from his unfortunate engagement, to devote his life to Louiſa and happineſs.

It may be eaſily imagined, that, however gradual the communication, a heart ſo ſuſceptible as that of Miſs Riverſdale could not paſs from extreme depreſſion to happineſs ſo unforeſeen, without experiencing ſtrong effects from the ſudden revulſion.

She was indeed, for ſome days, ſo diſordered, as to make it abſolutely neceſſary to

reſtrain the impatience of Mr. Stanville for the interview.

The poignant ſenſe of Sir Henry's death, had ſeemed to renew itſelf in this unexpected proſpect of felicity. There was a contrariety in her feelings, that inconceivably agitated and divided her mind. Before—all was conſonant; the loſs of her brother and of Stanville were blended together; her grief and her tears had been more divided between them than ſhe was perhaps aware of, or at leaſt than ſhe wiſhed to inveſtigate; and the effects of piety, reſignation, and charity, in reſtoring a degree of tranquillity to her mind, had ſatisfied her of the rectitude and propriety of her feelings. The preſent tranſition to proſpects of worldly felicity, wholly unconnected with the object to whoſe memory ſhe had perſuaded herſelf ſhe had ſacrificed them all, appeared like a ſacrilegious deſertion of fraternal affection; and it was ſome time before the joint rhetoric of Mrs. Blandford and Lady Riverſdale could ſatisfy her that ſhe might, without a dereliction of what was due to her brother, give way to her tenderneſs for Stanville.

It now remains to acquit Mr. Stanville of

every imputation that might attach to his reappearance, under circumſtances ſo different from thoſe, which had ſeemed unavoidably impending over his acquieſcence in the rigid ſentence pronounced by Miſs Riverſdale.

Upon his arrival in Languedoc, he was refuſed admittance to Agathe, whoſe letters had uniformly breathed impatience for his preſence, and dependance upon him alone for reſtoring her to peace and reputation. He obtained an interview with the friendly couſin, who explained to him, that, however ſteady the affection of Agathe had continued, his long abſence, and frequent delays, had at length given efficacy to the remonſtrances of the confeſſor, who held out the veil as the only adequate atonement for her fault; which, ſo far from being expiated by marriage with a heretic, would, on the contrary, he inſiſted, endanger the eternal ſalvation not only of her own ſoul, but of that of her child.

It will be readily allowed, that, as ſtrenuouſly as the dictates of honour had compelled Mr. Stanville to devote himſelf to Agathe, not

even Miſs Riverſdale, with all her undeviating ſtrictneſs of principle, could have deemed it incumbent upon him to interfere, or contend againſt the efficacy of the mode now propoſed, if adopted from conviction; which Mademoiſelle d'Auteuil aſſured him was ſo nearly effected, that Agathe had herſelf written to him, to prevent his ſetting out till he ſhould hear from her again: this letter had miſſed him by the road; he contented himſelf therefore with profeſſing earneſt ſolicitude for her happineſs, in a letter which he entruſted to her coulin, and which concluded with the aſſurance of his entire devotion to her will.

He had immediately informed Mrs. Blandford and Lady Belfont of the demur, but it was not imparted to Louiſa: having been preceded by the news of Sir Henry's death, which had ſo engroſſed and abſorbed her faculties, that perhaps even Mr. Stanville had loſt ſome of his hold upon her mind, at that moment; and at all events, to rack her with uncertainties, might have been as hazardous as cruel, in the precarious ſtate in which ſhe then was. He was therefore

ſtrictly enjoined to avoid the ſubject, in the correſpondence which had been agreed upon; and to this he faithfully adhered.

The fluctuations of Agathe continued for a conſiderable time, during which he awaited her pleaſure with ſubmiſſive patience; and when the prieſt at length triumphantly imparted to him her determination in favour of the veil, Mr. Stanville laid claim to the child. This involved a contention, which at length induced him to proceed to Rome, truſting to the liberality of the pontiff who then filled the chair, for that juſtice which the prejudices of the inferiour clergy, he thought, induced them to withhold. The illegality of the birth, however, was the plea of a refuſal, which admitted of no farther appeal; and his diſappointment was extreme, to forego the happineſs he had pictured to himſelf for his child, in being educated under the eye of his Louiſa; her tenderneſs he was certain would be extended to this innocent offspring of an unguarded hour, whoſe claims ſhe had already rated ſo high.

His return to England had followed ſo quick upon his laſt letter (for he had travelled night and day), that whilſt Mrs.

Blandford and Lady Belfont, whoſe procraſtinations had been continued even beyond the knowledge of the final determination, becauſe it did not add, that the noviciate was actually entered upon, which could alone preclude the poſſibility of a change; whilſt they were revolving the beſt means of preparing Louiſa for this happy reverſe of proſpect, the arrival of Mr. Stanville had broken in upon their deliberations; and his impetuoſity was now ſo uncontrollable, that the only means by which they could avert his proceeding inſtantly to throw himſelf at the feet of Miſs Riverſdale, was by Mrs. Blandford taking upon herſelf the office of paving the way, as has been related.

She had reached the Hall before breakfaſt, and had a conference with Lady Riverſdale, in which the mode of proceeding had been ſettled, whilſt Louiſa was gone upon her early avocations among the poor in the village.

The recovery of Louiſa was at length fully confirmed by the arrival of Stanville at the cottage, or rather by his appearance there, for his impatience had brought him to the Hall ſeveral days before it was deemed prudent

to expoſe the object of his adoration to the effects of an interview, which the Editor (conſcious of his deficiency in thoſe powers, by which Miſs Riverſdale has probably more than once intereſted the reader in the foregoing pages) does not attempt to deſcribe.

Suffice it to ſay, that, to Mr. Stanville's tender perſuaſions, and ſincere participation in the loſs his Louiſa mourned, ſhe owed her perfect reſtoration to the full ſenſe of the unqualified happineſs that now courted her acceptance.

A very few weeks confirmed a felicity, of which it would be vain to attempt to give an idea.

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To the readers who have taken a ſufficient intereſt in theſe letters, to wiſh their authenticity to be verified, the Editor will briefly ſtate in what manner, and with what view the manuſcript has been put into his hands.

Upon receiving the intelligence of the death of Sir Henry Riverſdale, it appeared material to ſecure the correſpondence between the ſiſter and brother from falling into the hands of ſtrangers; and Lady Belfont employed Sir George Rutland to write to a

friend in India, to pay particular attention to the letters being all returned, with the reſt of Sir Henry's effects.

Before they could reach England, Mrs. Stanville was in a ſituation that more particularly called for exemption from all unneceſſary agitation; and Mr. Stanville was entruſted to reſtore them to her at a ſafe opportunity.

As Louiſa followed up her maternal duties to their fulleſt extent, there was equal cauſe to guard againſt emotion, ſuch as the very ſight of theſe letters muſt have occaſioned during the period of nutrition, as during that of pregnancy: by theſe means a length of time elapſed, and Mr. Stanville, whoſe ſolicitude for the happineſs of his lovely wife, did but increaſe with the power of promoting it, determined, unleſs ſhe ſhould particularly expreſs a wiſh for it, to ſuppreſs the packet altogether.

With him, therefore, it remained, during the few happy years in which it pleaſed Providence to allow him a foretaſte of joys which are now aſſuredly permanent in the eternal regions, whither our thoughts muſt follow theſe ſuperiour beings; their meaſure of earthly felicity was ſoon filled; and as no-

thing ſo perfect could be laſting, it ought ſcarcely to be deemed matter of regret, that, after bearing Mr. Stanville three lovely pledges of affection, Louiſa was reſcued from the viciſſitudes inſeparable from human nature, to the rich reward of her virtues. The ſerenity, the humble confidence of her laſt moments, her luminous conviction of a certain reunion, where change ſhould be no more, all contributed to complete the work her letters had begun, and infuſed into the long doubting mind of Mr. Stanville a ſenſe of piety, which gave the finiſhing ſtroke to his exalted character; but he loſt the benefit of her pure, perſuaſive, unaffected eloquence, at the very moment of its utmoſt importance, when it would have enforced the duty of reſignation to the divine will; and from the inſtant in which *ſhe* ceaſed to breathe, he died to every worldly object; not even his children could awaken his intereſt: to his ſiſter he conſigned them, and ere the return of the anniverſary of Louiſa's death, his ſpirit had fled to that reunion which now defies the power of fate.

Lady Belfont has not deſerted her charge, but with the avocations ſeems to have im-

bibed all the feelings of a mother, and to find her chief conſolation for the loſs of the parents, in devoting herſelf unremittingly to theſe intereſting relicts of friends ſo very dear.

The letters, together with ſome other valuable papers, were confided to Mrs. Blandford, in the laſt weeks of Mr. Stanville's life, and had probably never ſeen the light, but for the overthrow, ſome years ſince, of thoſe ſacred aſylums, which, though too frequently abuſed by parental deſpotiſm, have occaſionally proved the refuge of piety and virtue.

Thence was the unhappy Agathe, who had recovered peace from ſincere repentance, and ſome degree of happineſs from having been indulged by the good-natured prieſt in the liberty to ſuperintend the education of her little girl, who, under a feigned name, he had agreed to place in the ſame convent—Thence was the unhappy Agathe, with her daughter, again thrown into a diſturbed unpitying world, where calamity was become too general for individual ſufferings to be conſidered. Her relations either fled or butchered, the hapleſs wanderer had no reſt-

ing place in her own country, and ſought an aſylum here, without knowing how to diſcover the man upon whom ſhe felt ſhe had claims.

It was a few months after the deceaſe of Mr. Stanville, that chance threw theſe two hapleſs beings into the way of Mrs. Blandford; of courſe they were ſoon reſcued from actual want. In canvaſſing the means to increaſe their little ſtore, it occurred to Mrs. Blandford, that the publication of a correſpondence, ſo uncommon as that of Miſs Riverſdale, might prove highly beneficial. The death of Lady Riverſdale, ſhortly after that of her daughter, removed the only point of delicacy that might have militated againſt the propriety of the thought.

I have had the honour to be ſelected by Mrs. Blandford, as an unemployed perſon, never reluctant to make my leiſure hours uſeful. We agreed upon the neceſſity of diſguiſing names and circumſtances, in conſideration of ſeveral perſons, who have contributed to enliven the narrative, being ſtill in exiſtence. Much of family concerns has been ſuppreſſed, as tending more to lead to the diſcovery of the parties, than to improve

the intereſt. No material circumſtance has been added, but connection here and there ſupplied, and perhaps a character thrown in, to increaſe the novel-like appearance, in conformity to the taſte of the day.

It was the wiſh of Mrs. Blandford to have ſuppreſſed a great part of Mr. Stanville's ſtory relative to Agathe, but Agathe herſelf reſolutely reſiſted every ſuggeſtion of the kind, and ſeemed to conſider the hazard of being detected, in this public acknowledgment of her errour, under the thin diſguiſe of a mere change of names and places, as a ſort of religious expiation.

Mrs. Blandford was alſo ſtrenuouſly urgent for the eraſure of many paſſages ſhe deemed too flattering to herſelf; but here the Editor has ventured to adhere obſtinately to his own judgment, at the riſk even of incurring her diſpleaſure: he could not ſubmit, by ſuppreſſing praiſe ſo juſtly due, to rob the public of ſo bright an example of female perfection.

The few letters of Sir Henry that have been interſperſed, happened to be in the poſſeſſion of Lady Belfont, to whom they had been lent by Louiſa.

Should the public reception of theſe let-

ters anſwer the friendly purpoſe that has ſuggeſted the publication of them, the Editor will be overpaid for the anxious ſolicitude with which he has performed the taſk enjoined to him.

Should partiality have rated their merit beyond what public opinion will ſanction, he will at leaſt have the conſolation of meaning well.

THE END.

ERRATA.

VOL. I.

Page 18, line 9, for *may* read *will.*
Page 45, line 24, for *effects* read *effect.*
Page 92, line 3, for *bravas & pulitas* read *brava's & pulita's.*
Page 147, line 10, for *It* read I.
Page 170, line 23, for *ooked* read *looked.*
Page 360, line 20, for *15th July, of on which* read *15th of July, on which.*

ERRATA.

VOL. II.

Page 11, line 5, for *Hans* read *Frederick.*
Page 137, line 7, for *pourres* read *pourrez.*
Page 206, line 16, for *Balsar* read *Balsius.*
Page 281, line 14, for *Sauvagine* read *Sauvagerie.*
Page 299, line 9, for *for* read *from.*

ERRATA.

VOL. III.

Page 11, line 10, after "*daughter*" read *in-law.*
Page 48, line 14, for *him* read *her.*
Page 72, line 2, for *fouriere* read *Tourriere.*
Page 76, line 1, for *cadine* read *badine.*
Page 115, line 21, for *Miraude* read *Mirande.*
Page 121, line 18, for *cair* read *car.*
Page 158, line 17, before "*mind*" insert the word *own.*
Page 183, line 12, for *even* read *ever.*
Page 203, line 23, for *go* read *good.*
Page 325, line 9, for *cirliumkickshaws* read *cirlicumkickshaws.*

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Letters of Miss Riversdale

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